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LETTERS

ON THE

STUDY and USE

OF

HISTORY.

By the late RIGHT HONORABLE

HENRY ST. JOHN,

LORD VISCOUNT BOLINGBROKE.

A NEW EDITION.

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OF THE

STUDY of HISTORY.

LETTER I.

Chantelou in Touraine, Nov. 6, 1735.

MY LORD,

I HAVE conſidered formerly, with a good deal of attention, the ſubject on which you command me to communicate my thoughts to you: and I practiſed in thoſe days, as much as buſineſs and pleaſure allowed me time to do, the rules that ſeemed to me neceſſary to be obſerved in the ſtudy of hiſtory. They were very different from thoſe which writers on the ſame ſubject have recommended, and which are commonly practiſed. But I confeſs to your lordship, that this neither gave me then, nor has given me ſince, any diſtruſt of them. I do not affect ſingularity. On the contrary, I think that a due deference is to be paid to received opinions, and that a due compliance with received cuſtoms is to be held; though both the one and the other should be, what they often are, abſurd or ridiculous. But this ſervitude is outward only, and abridges in no ſort the liberty of private judgment. The obligations of ſubmitting to it likewiſe, even, outwardly,

extend no further, than to thoſe opinions and cuſtoms which cannot be oppoſed; or from which we cannot deviate without doing hurt, or giving offence, to ſociety. In all theſe caſes, our ſpeculations ought to be free: in all other caſes, our practice may be ſo. Without any regard therefore to the opinion and practice even of the learned world, I am very willing to tell you mine. But, as it is hard to recover a thread of thought long ago laid aſide, and impoſſible to prove ſome things, and explain others, without the aſſiſtance of many books which I have not here; your lordſhip muſt be content with ſuch an imperfect ſketch, as I am able to ſend you at preſent in this letter.

THE motives that carry men to the ſtudy of hiſtory are different. Some intend, if ſuch as they may be ſaid to ſtudy, nothing more than amuſement, and read the life of ARISTIDES or PHOCION, of EPAMINONDAS or SCIPIO, ALEXANDER or CAESAR, juſt as they play a game at cards, or as they would read the ſtory of the ſeven champions.

OTHERS there are, whoſe motive to this ſtudy is nothing better, and who have the further diſadvantage of becoming a nuiſance very often to ſociety, in proportion to the progreſs they make. The former do not improve their reading to any good purpoſe: the latter pervert it to a very bad one, and grow in impertinence as they encreaſe in learning. I think I have known moſt of the firſt kind in England, and moſt of the laſt in France. The perſons I mean are thoſe who read to talk, to ſhine in converſation, and to impoſe in company: who

having few ideas to vend of their own growth, ſtore their minds with crude unruminated facts and ſentences; and hope to ſupply, by bare memory, the want of imagination and judgment.

BUT theſe are in the two loweſt forms. The next I ſhall mention are in one a little higher; in the form of thoſe who grow neither wiſer nor better by ſtudy themſelves, but who enable others to ſtudy with greater eaſe, and to purpoſes more uſeful; who make fair copies of foul manuſcripts, give the ſignification of hard words, and take a great deal of other grammatical pains. The obligation to theſe men would be great indeed, if they were in general able to do any thing better, and ſubmitted to this drudgery for the ſake of the public; as ſome of them, it muſt be owned with gratitude, have done, but not later, I think, than about the time of the reſurrection of letters. When works of importance are preſſing, generals themſelves may take up the pick-axe and the ſpade; but in the ordinary courſe of things, when that preſſing neceſſity is over, ſuch tools are left in the hands deſtined to uſe them, the hands of common ſoldiers and peaſants. I approve therefore very much the devotion of a ſtudious man at Chriſt-Church, who was over-heard in his oratory entering into a detail with GOD, as devout perſons are apt to do, and, amongſt other particular thankſgivings, acknowledging the divine goodneſs in furniſhing the world with makers of Dictionaries! Theſe men court fame as well as their betters, by ſuch means as GOD has given them to acquire it:

and LITTLETON exerted all the genius he had, when he made a dictionary, though STEPHENS did not. They deſerve encouragement, however, whilſt they continue to compile, and neither affect wit, nor preſume to reaſon.

THERE is a fourth claſs, of much leſs uſe than theſe, but of much greater name. Men of the firſt rank in learning, and to whom the whole tribe of ſcholars bow with reverence. A man muſt be as indifferent as I am to common cenſure or approbation, to avow a thorough contempt for the whole buſineſs of theſe learned lives; for all the reſearches into antiquity, for all the ſyſtems of chronology and hiſtory, that we owe to the immenſe labours of a SCALIGER, a BOCHART, a PETAVIUS, an USHER, and even a MARSHAM. The ſame materials are common to them all; but theſe materials are few, and there is a moral impoſſibility that they ſhould ever have more. They have combined theſe into every form that can be given to them: they have ſuppoſed, they have gueſſed, they have joined disjointed paſſages of different authors, and broken traditions of uncertain originals, of various people, and of centuries remote from one another as well as from ours. In ſhort, that they might leave no liberty untaken, even a wild fantaſtical ſimilitude of ſounds has ſerved to prop up a ſyſtem. As the materials they have are few, ſo are the very beſt, and ſuch as paſs for authentic, extremely precarious; as ſome of theſe learned perſons themſelves confeſs.

JULIUS AFRICANUS, EUSEBIUS, and GEORGE the monk opened the principal ſources of all this ſcience; but they corrupted the waters. Their point of view was to make profane hiſtory and chronology agree with ſacred; though the latter chronology is very far from being eſtabliſhed with the clearneſs and certainty neceſſary to make it a rule. For this purpoſe, the ancient monuments, that theſe writers conveyed to poſterity, were digeſted by them according to the ſyſtem they were to maintain: and none of theſe monuments were delivered down in their original form, and genuine purity. The Dynaſties of MANETHO, for inſtance, are broken to pieces by EUSEBIUS; and ſuch fragments of them as ſuited his deſign, are ſtruck into his work. We have, we know, no more of them. The Codex Alexandrinus we owe to GEORGE the monk. We have no other authority for it: and one cannot ſee without amazement ſuch a man as Sir JOHN MARSHAM undervaluing this authority in one page, and building his ſyſtem upon it in the next. He ſeems even by the lightneſs of his expreſſions, if I remember well, for it is long ſince I looked into his canon, not to be much concerned what foundation his ſyſtem had, though he ſhewed his ſkill in forming one, and in reducing the immenſe antiquity of the Egyptians within the limits of the Hebraic calculation. In ſhort, my lord, all theſe ſyſtems are ſo many enchanted caſtles; they appear to be ſomething, they are nothing but appearances: like them too, diſſolve the charm, and they vaniſh from the ſight. To diſſolve the charm, we muſt

begin at the beginning of them: the expreſſion may be odd, but it is ſignificant. We muſt examine ſcrupulously and indifferently the foundations on which they lean: and when we find theſe either faintly probable, or groſsly improbable, it would be foolish to expect any thing better in the ſuperſtructure. This ſcience is one of thoſe that are "a limine ſalutandae." To do thus much may be neceſſary, that grave authority may not impoſe on our ignorance: to do more, would be to aſſiſt this very authority in impoſing falſe ſcience upon us. I had rather take the DARIUS whom ALEXANDER conquered, for the ſon of HYSTASPES, and make as many anachroniſms as a Jewish chronologer, than ſacrifice half my life to collect all the learned lumber that fills the head of an antiquary.

OF THE STUDY of HISTORY.

LETTER II.

Concerning the true uſe and advantages of it.

LET me ſay ſomething of hiſtory in general, before I deſcend into the conſideration of particular parts of it, or of the various methods of ſtudy, or of the different views of thoſe that apply themſelves to it, as I had begun to do in my former letter.

THE love of hiſtory ſeems inſeparable from human nature becauſe it ſeems inſeparable from ſelf-love. The ſame principle in this inſtance carries us forward and backward, to future and to paſt ages. We imagine that the things, which affect us, muſt affect poſterity: this ſentiment runs through mankind, from CAESAR down to the parish clerk in POPE's miſcellany. We are fond of preſerving, as far as it is in our frail power, the memory of our own adventures, of thoſe of our own time, and of thoſe that preceded it. Rude heaps of ſtones have been raiſed, and ruder hymns have been compoſed, for this purpoſe, by nations who had not yet the uſe of arts and letters. To go no farther back, the triumphs of ODIN were celebrated in runic ſongs, and the feats of our

British anceſtors were recorded in thoſe of their bards. The ſavages of America have the ſame cuſtom at this day: and long hiſtorical ballads of their huntings and their wars are ſung at all their feſtivals. There is no need of ſaying how this paſſion grows, among civilized nations, in proportion to the means of gratifying it: but let us obſerve that the ſame principle of nature directs us as ſtrongly, and more generally as well as more early, to indulge our own curioſity, inſtead of preparing to gratify that of others. The child hearkens with delight to the tales of his nurſe: he learns to read, and he devours with eagerneſs fabulous legends and novels: in riper years he applies himſelf to hiſtory, or to that which he takes for hiſtory, to authorized romance: and, even in age, the deſire of knowing what has happened to other men, yields to the deſire alone of relating what has happened to ourſelves. Thus hiſtory, true or falſe, ſpeaks to our paſſions always. What pity is it, my lord, that even the beſt ſhould ſpeak to our underſtandings ſo ſeldom? That it does ſo, we have none to blame but ourſelves. Nature has done her part. She has opened this ſtudy to every man who can read and think: and what she has made the moſt agreeable, reaſon can make the moſt uſeful, application of our minds. But if we conſult our reaſon, we shall be far from following the examples of our fellow-creatures, in this as in moſt other caſes, who are ſo proud of being rational. We shall neither read to ſoothe our indolence, nor to gratify our vanity:

as little ſhall we content ourſelves to drudge like grammarians and critics, that others may be able to ſtudy with greater eaſe and profit, like philoſophers and ſtateſmen: as little ſhall we affect the ſlender merit of becoming great ſcholars at the expence of groping all our lives in the dark mazes of antiquity. All theſe miſtake the true drift of ſtudy, and the true uſe of hiſtory. Nature gave us curioſity to excite the induſtry of our minds; but ſhe never intended it ſhould be made the principal, much leſs the ſole, object of their application. The true and proper object of this application is a conſtant improvement in private and in public virtue. An application to any ſtudy, that tends neither directly nor indirectly to make us better men and better citizens, is at beſt but a ſpecious and ingenious ſort of idleneſs, to uſe an expreſſion of TILLOTSON: and the knowledge we acquire by it is a creditable kind of ignorance, nothing more. This creditable kind of ignorance is, in my opinion, the whole benefit which the generality of men, even of the moſt learned, reap from the ſtudy of hiſtory: and yet the ſtudy of hiſtory ſeems to me, of all other, the moſt proper to train us up to private and public virtue.

YOUR lordſhip may very well be ready by this time, and after ſo much bold cenſure on my part, to ask me, what then is the true uſe of hiſtory? in what reſpects it may ſerve to make us better and wiſer? and what method is to be purſued in the ſtudy of it, for attaining theſe great ends? I will anſwer you by quoting what I have read

ſomewhere or other, in DIONYSIUS HALICARN, I think, that hiſtory is philoſophy teaching by examples. We need but to caſt our eyes on the world, and we ſhall ſee the daily force of example: we need but to turn them inward, and we ſhall ſoon diſcover why example has this force. "Pauci „ prudentia," ſays TACITUS, "honeſta ab „ deterioribus, utilia ab noxiis diſcernunt: plures „ aliorum eventis docentur." Such is the imperfection of human underſtanding, ſuch the frail temper of our minds, that abſtract or general propoſitions, though ever ſo true, appear obſcure or doubtful to us very often, till they are explained by examples: and that the wiſeſt leſſons in favour of virtue go but a little way to convince the judgment, and determine the will, unleſs they are enforced by the ſame means; and we are obliged to apply to ourſelves what we ſee happen to other men. Inſtructions by precept have the further diſadvantage of coming on the authority of others, and frequently require a long deduction of reaſoning. "Homines amplius oculis, quam auribus, „ credunt: longum iter eſt per praecepta, breve „ et efficax per exempla." The reaſon of this judgment, which I quote from one of SENECA's epiſtles in confirmation of my own opinion, reſts, I think, on this; that when examples are pointed out to us, there is a kind of appeal, with which we are flattered, made to our ſenſes, as well as our underſtandings. The inſtruction comes then upon our own authority: we frame the precept after our own experience, and yield to fact when we reſiſt ſpeculation. But this is not

the only advantage of inſtruction by example; for example appeals not to our underſtanding alone, but to our paſſions likewiſe. Example aſſuages theſe, or animates them; ſets paſſion on the ſide of judgment, and makes the whole man of a-piece; which is more than the ſtrongeſt reaſoning and the cleareſt demonſtration can do: and thus forming habits by repetition, example ſecures the obſervance of thoſe precepts which example inſinuated. Is it not PLINY, my lord, who ſays, that the gentleſt, he ſhould have added the moſt effectual, way of commanding, is by example? "Mitius „ jubetur exemplo." The harsheſt orders are ſoftened by example, and tyranny itſelf becomes perſuaſive. What pity it is that ſo few princes have learned this way of commanding? But again: the force of examples is not confined to thoſe alone, that paſs immediately under our ſight: the examples, that memory ſuggeſts, have the ſame effect in their degree, and an habit of recalling them will ſoon produce the habit of imitating them. In the ſame epiſtle, from whence I cited a paſſage juſt now, SENECA ſays that CLEANTHES had never become ſo perfect a copy of ZENO, if he had not paſſed his Life with him; that PLATO, ARISTOTLE, and the other philoſophers of that ſchool, profited more by the example, than by the diſcourſe of SOCRATES. (But here, by the way, SENECA miſtook; for SOCRATES died two years, according to ſome, and four years, according to others, before the birth of ARISTOTLE: and his miſtake might come from the inaccuracy of

thoſe who collected for him; as ERASMUS obſerves, after QUINTILIAN, in his judgment on SENECA.) But be this, which was ſcarce worth a parentheſis, as it will; he adds that METRODORUS, HERMACHUS and POLYAENUS, men of great note, were formed by living under the ſame roof with EPICURUS, not by frequenting his ſchool. Theſe are inſtances of the force of immediate example. But your lordship knows that the citizens of Rome placed the images of their anceſtors in the veſtibules of their houſes; ſo that, whenever they went in or out, theſe venerable buſtoes met their eyes, and recalled the glorious actions of the dead, to fire the living, to excite them to imitate, and even to emulate their great forefathers. The ſucceſs anſwered the deſign. The virtue of one generation was transfuſed, by the magic of example, into ſeveral: and a ſpirit of heroiſm was maintained through many ages of that common-wealth. Now theſe are ſo many inſtances of the force of remote example; and from all theſe inſtances we may conclude, that examples of both kinds are neceſſary.

THE ſchool of example, my lord, is the world: and the maſters of this ſchool are hiſtory and experience. I am far from contending that the former is preferable to the latter. I think upon the whole otherwiſe: but this I ſay, that the former is abſolutely neceſſary to prepare us for the latter, and to accompany us whilſt we are under the diſcipline of the latter, that is, through the whole courſe of our lives. No doubt ſome few men may be quoted, to whom nature gave

what art and induſtry can give to no man. But ſuch examples will prove nothing againſt me, becauſe I admit that the ſtudy of hiſtory, without experience, is inſufficient; but aſſert, that experience itſelf is ſo without genius. Genius is preferable to the other two; but I would wish to find the three together: for how great ſoever a genius may be, and how much ſoever he may acquire new light and heat, as he proceeds in his rapid courſe, certain it is that he will never shine with the full luſtre, nor shed the full influence he is capable of, unleſs to his own experience he adds the experience of other men and other ages. Genius, without the improvement, at leaſt, of experience, is what comets once were thought to be, a blazing meteor, irregular in his courſe, and dangerous in his approach; of no uſe to any ſyſtem, and able to deſtroy any. Mere ſons of earth, if they have experience without any knowledge of the hiſtory of the world, are but half ſcholars in the ſcience of mankind. And if they are converſant in hiſtory without experience, they are worſe than ignorant; they are pedants, always incapable, ſometimes meddling and preſuming. The man, who has all three, is an honour to his country, and a public bleſſing: and ſuch, I truſt, your lordship will be in this century, as your great-grand-father * was in the laſt.

I have inſiſted a little the longer on this head, and have made theſe diſtinctions the rather, becauſe though I attribute a great deal more, than many will

* Earl of CLARENDON.

be ready to allow, to the ſtudy of hiſtory; yet I would not willingly even ſeem to fall into the ridicule of aſcribing to it ſuch extravagant effects, as ſeveral have done, from TULLY down to CASAUBON, LA MOTHE LE VAYER, and other modern pedants. When TULLY informs us, in the ſecond book of his Tuſculan diſputations, that the firſt SCIPIO AFRICANUS had always in his hands the works of XENOPHON, he advances nothing but what is probable and reaſonable. To ſay nothing of the retreat of the ten thouſand, nor of other parts of XENOPHON's writings; the images of virtue, repreſented in that admirable picture the Cyropaedia, were proper to entertain a ſoul that was fraught with virtue, and CYRUS was worthy to be imitated by SCIPIO. So SELIM emulated CAESAR, whoſe Commentaries were translated for his uſe againſt the cuſtoms of the Turks: ſo CAESAR emulated ALEXANDER; and ALEXANDER, ACHILLES. There is nothing ridiculous here, except the uſe that is made of this paſſage by thoſe who quote it. But what the ſame TULLY ſays, in the fourth book of his academical diſputations, concerning LUCULLUS, ſeems to me very extraordinary. „ In Aſiam factus „ imperator venit; cum eſſet Roma profectus rei „ militaris rudis;" (one would be ready to aſcribe ſo ſudden a change, and ſo vaſt an improvement, to nothing leſs than knowledge infuſed by inſpiration, if we were not aſſured in the ſame place that they were effected by very natural means, by ſuch as it is in every man's power to employ) „ partim percontando a peritis, partim in rebus geſtis legendis."

LUCULLUS, according to this account, verified the reproach on the Roman nobility, which SALLUST puts into the mouth of MARIUS. But as I diſcover the paſſion of MARIUS, and his prejudices to the patricians, in one caſe; ſo I diſcover, methinks, the cunning of TULLY, and his partiality to himſelf, in the other. LUCULLUS, after he had been choſen conſul, obtained by intrigue the government of Cilicia, and ſo put himſelf into a ſituation of commanding the Roman army againſt MITHRIDATES: TULLY had the ſame government afterwards, and though he had no MITHRIDATES, nor any other enemy of conſequence, oppoſed to him; though all his military feats conſiſted in ſurprizing and pillaging a parcel of Highlanders and wild Cilicians; yet he aſſumed the airs of a conqueror, and deſcribed his actions in ſo pompous a ſtyle, that the account becomes burleſque. He laughs, indeed, in one of his letters to ATTICUS, at his generalſhip: but if we turn to thoſe he writ to COELIUS RUFUS, and to CATO, upon this occaſion, or to thoſe wherein he expreſſes to ATTICUS his reſentment againſt CATO, for not propoſing in his favor the honors uſually decreed to conquerors, we may ſee how vanity turned his head, and how impudently he inſiſted on obtaining a triumph. Is it any ſtrain now to ſuppoſe, that he meant to inſinuate, in the paſſage I have quoted about LUCULLUS, that the difference between him and the former governor of CILICIA, even in military merit, aroſe from the different conjuncture alone; and that LUCULLUS could not have done in Cilicia, at that time, more than he himſelf did?

CICERO had read and queſtioned at leaſt as much as LUCULLUS, and would therefore have appeared as great a captain, if he had had as great a prince as MITHRIDATES to encounter. But the truth is, that LUCULLUS was made a great captain by theory, or the ſtudy of hiſtory, alone, no more than FERDINAND of Spain and ALPHONSUS of Naples were cured of deſperate diſtempers by reading LIVY and QUINTUS CURTIUS: a ſilly tale, which BODIN, AMYOT, and others have picked up and propagated. LUCULLUS had ſerved in his youth againſt the Marſi, probably in other wars, and SYLLA took early notice of him: he went into the eaſt with this general, and had a great ſhare in his confidence. He commanded in ſeveral expeditions. It was he who reſtored the Colophonians to their liberty, and who punished the revolt of the people of Mytelene. Thus we ſee that LUCULLUS was formed by experience, as well as ſtudy, and by an experience gained in thoſe very countries, where he gathered ſo many laurels afterwards in fighting againſt the ſame enemy. The late duke of MARLBOROUGH never read XENOPHON, moſt certainly, nor the relation perhaps of any modern wars; but he ſerved in his youth under monſieur de TURENNE, and I have heard that he was taken notice of in thoſe early days, by that great man. He afterwards commanded in an expedition to Ireland, ſerved a campaign or two, if I miſtake not, under king WILLIAM in Flanders: and, beſides theſe occaſions, had none of gaining experience in war, till he came to the head of our armies in one

thouſand

thouſand ſeven hundred and two, and triumphed, not over Aſiatic troops, but over the veteran armies of France. The Roman had on his ſide genius and experience cultivated by ſtudy: the Briton had genius improved by experience, and no more. The firſt therefore is not an example of what ſtudy can do alone; but the latter is an example of what genius and experience can do without ſtudy. They can do much, to be ſure, when the firſt is given in a ſuperior degree. But ſuch examples are very rare: and when they happen, it will be ſtill true, that they would have had fewer blemiſhes, and would have come nearer to the perfection of private and public virtue, in all the arts of peace and atchievements of war, if the views of ſuch men had been enlarged, and their ſentiments ennobled, by acquiring that caſt of thought, and that temper of mind, which will grow up and become habitual in every man who applies himſelf early to the ſtudy of hiſtory, as well as to the ſtudy of philoſophy, with the intention of being wiſer and better, without the affectation of being more learned.

THE temper of the mind is formed, and a certain turn given to our ways of thinking; in a word, the ſeeds of that moral character which cannot wholly alter the natural character, but may correct the evil and improve the good that is in it, or do the very contrary, are ſown betimes, and much ſooner than is commonly ſuppoſed. It is equally certain, that we ſhall gather or not gather experience, be the better or the worſe for this experience, when we

come into the world and mingle amongſt mankind, according to the temper of mind, and the turn of thought, that we have acquired beforehand, and bring along with us. They will tincture all our future acquiſitions; ſo that the very ſame experience, which ſecures the judgment of one man, or excites him to virtue, ſhall lead another into error, or plunge him into vice. From hence it follows, that the ſtudy of hiſtory has in this reſpect a double advantage. If experience alone can make us perfect in our parts, experience cannot begin to teach them till we are actually on the ſtage: whereas, by a previous application to this ſtudy, we con them over at leaſt, before we appear there: we are not quite unprepared, we learn our parts ſooner, and we learn them better.

LET me explain what I mean by an example. There is ſcarce any folly or vice more epidemical among the ſons of men, than that ridiculous and hurtful vanity, by which the people of each country are apt to prefer themſelves to thoſe of every other; and to make their own cuſtoms, and manners, and opinions, the ſtandards of right and wrong, of true and falſe. The Chineſe mandarins were ſtrangely ſurpriſed, and almoſt incredulous, when the Jeſuits ſhewed them how ſmall a figure their empire made in the general map of the world. The Samojedes wondered much at the Czar of Muſcovy for not living among them: and the Hottentot, who returned from Europe, ſtripped himſelf naked as ſoon as he came home, put on his bracelets of guts and garbage, and grew ſtinking

and louſy as faſt as he could. Now nothing can contribute more to prevent us from being tainted with this vanity, than to accuſtom ourſelves early to contemplate the different nations of the earth, in that vaſt map which hiſtory ſpreads before us, in their riſe and their fall, in their barbarous and civilized ſtates, in the likeneſs and unlikeneſs of them all to one another, and of each to itſelf. By frequently renewing this proſpect to the mind, the Mexican with his cap and coat of feathers, ſacrificing a human victim to his god, will not appear more ſavage to our eyes, than the Spaniard with an hat on his head, and a gonilla round his neck, ſacrificing whole nations to his ambition, his avarice, and even the wantonneſs of his cruelty. I might ſhew, by a multitude of other examples, how hiſtory prepares us for experience, and guides us in it: and many of theſe would be both curious and important. I might likewiſe bring ſeveral other inſtances, wherein hiſtory ſerves to purge the mind of thoſe national partialities and prejudices that we are apt to contract in our education, and that experience for the moſt part rather confirms than removes: becauſe it is for the moſt part confined, like our education. But I apprehend growing too prolix, and ſhall therefore conclude this head by obſerving, that though an early and proper application, to the ſtudy of hiſtory will contribute extremely to keep our minds free from a ridiculous partiality in favor of our own country, and a vicious prejudice againſt others; yet the ſame ſtudy will create in us a preference

of affection to our own country. There is a ſtory told of ABGARUS. He brought ſeveral beaſts taken in different places to Rome, they ſay, and let them looſe before AUGUSTUS: every beaſt ran immediately to that part of the Circus, where a parcel of earth taken from his native ſoil had been laid. „ Credat Judaeus Apella. " This tale might paſs on JOSEPHUS; for in him, I believe, I read it: but ſurely the love of our country is a leſſon of reaſon, not an inſtitution of nature. Education and habit, obligation and intereſt, attach us to it, not inſtinct. It is however ſo neceſſary to be cultivated, and the proſperity of all ſocieties, as well as the grandeur of ſome, depends upon it ſo much, that orators by their eloquence, and poets by their enthuſiaſm, have endeavoured to work up this precept of morality into a principle of paſſion. But the examples which we find in hiſtory, improved by the lively deſcriptions, and the juſt applauſes or cenſures of hiſtorians, will have a much better and more permanent effect, than declamation, or ſong, or the dry ethics of mere philoſophy. In fine, to converſe with hiſtorians is to keep good company: many of them were excellent men, and thoſe who were not ſuch, have taken care however to appear ſuch in their writings. It muſt be therefore of great uſe to prepare ourſelves by this converſation for that of the world; and to receive our firſt impreſſions, and to acquire our firſt habits, in a ſcene where images of virtue and vice are continually repreſented to us in the colors that belong properly to them, before we enter on

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another ſcene, where virtue and vice are too often confounded, and what belongs to one is aſcribed to the other.

BESIDES the advantage of beginning our acquaintance with mankind ſooner, and of bringing with us into the world, and the buſineſs of it, ſuch a caſt of thought and ſuch a temper of mind, as will enable us to make a better uſe of our experience; there is this further advantage in the ſtudy of hiſtory, that the improvement we make by it extends to more objects, and is made at the expence of other men: whereas that improvement, which is the effect of our own experience, is confined to fewer objects, and is made at our own expence. To ſtate the account fairly therefore between theſe two improvements; though the latter be the more valuable, yet allowance being made on one ſide for the much greater number of examples that hiſtory preſents to us, and deduction being made on the other of the price we often pay for our experience, the value of the former will riſe in proportion. " I have recorded theſe „ things, " ſays POLYBIUS, after giving an account of the defeat of REGULUS, " that they who read „ theſe commentaries may be rendered better by „ them; for all men have two ways of improve- „ ment, one ariſing from their own experience, „ and one from the experience of others. Evi- „ dentior quidem illa eſt, quæ per propria ducit „ infortunia; at tutior illa, quæ per aliena. „ I uſe CASAUBON'S translation. POLYBIUS goes on, and concludes, " that ſince the firſt of theſe ways

„ expoſes us to great labour and peril, whilſt „ the ſecond works the ſame good effect, and is „ attended by no evil circumſtance, every one „ ought to take for granted, that the ſtudy of „ hiſtory is the beſt ſchool where he can learn „ how to conduct himſelf in all the ſituations of „ life." REGULUS had ſeen at Rome many examples of magnanimity, of frugality, of the contempt of riches and of other virtues; and theſe virtues he practiſed. But he had not learned, nor had opportunity of learning another leſſon, which the examples recorded in hiſtory inculcate frequently, the leſſon of moderation. An inſatiable thirſt of military fame, an unconfined ambition of extending their empire, an extravagant confidence in their own courage and force, an inſolent contempt of their enemies, and an impetuous over-bearing ſpirit with which they purſued all their enterprizes, compoſed in his days the diſtinguishing character of a Roman. Whatever the ſenate and people reſolved to the members of that common-wealth, appeared both practicable and juſt. Neither difficulties nor dangers could check them; and their ſages had not yet diſcovered, that virtues in exceſs degenerate into vices. Notwithſtanding the beautiful rant which HORACE puts into his mouth, I make no doubt that REGULUS learned at Carthage thoſe leſſons of moderation which he had not learned at Rome; but he learned them by experience, and the fruits of this experience came too late, and coſt too dear; for they coſt the total defeat of the Roman army, the prolongation of a

calamitous war which might have been finished by a glorious peace, the loſs of liberty to thouſands of Roman citizens, and to REGULUS himſelf the loſs of life in the midſt of torments, if we are entirely to credit what is perhaps exaggeration in the Roman authors.

THERE is another advantage, worthy our obſervation, that belongs to the ſtudy of hiſtory; and that I ſhall mention here, not only becauſe of the importance of it, but becauſe it leads me immediately to ſpeak of the nature of the improvement we ought to have in our view, and of the method in which it ſeems to me that this improvement ought to be purſued: two particulars from which your lordship may think perhaps that I digreſs too long. The advantage I mean conſiſts in this, that the examples which hiſtory preſents to us, both of men and of events, are generally complete: the whole example is before us, and conſequently the whole leſſon, or ſometimes the various leſſons, which philoſophy propoſes to teach us by this example. For firſt, as to men; we ſee them at their whole length in hiſtory, and we ſee them generally there through a medium leſs partial at leaſt than that of experience: for I imagine, that a whig or a tory, whilſt thoſe parties ſubſiſted, would have condemned in SATURNINUS the ſpirit of faction which he applauded in his own tribunes, and would have applauded in DRUSUS the ſpirit of moderation which he deſpiſed in thoſe of the contrary party, and which he ſuſpected and hated in thoſe of his own party. The villain who has

impoſed on mankind by his power or cunning, and whom experience could not unmask for a time, is unmasked at length: and the honeſt man, who has been miſunderſtood or defamed, is juſtified before his ſtory ends. Or if this does not happen, if the villain dies with his mask on, in the midſt of applauſe, and honor, and wealth, and power, and if the honeſt man dies under the ſame load of calumny and diſgrace under which he lived, driven perhaps into exile, and expoſed to want; yet we ſee hiſtorical juſtice executed, the name of one branded with infamy, and that of the other celebrated with panegyric to ſucceeding ages. "Praecipuum munus annalium reor, ne virtutes ſileantur; utque pravis dictis factiſque ex poſteritate et infamia metus ſit." Thus, according to TACITUS, and according to truth, from which his judgments ſeldom deviate, the principal duty of hiſtory is to erect a tribunal, like that among the Egyptians, mentioned by DIODORUS SICULUS, where men and princes themſelves were tried, and condemned or acquitted, after their deaths; where thoſe who had not been punished for their crimes, and thoſe who had not been honored for their virtues, received a juſt retribution. The ſentence is pronounced in one caſe, as it was in the other, too late to correct or recompenſe; but it is pronounced in time to render theſe examples of general inſtruction to mankind. Thus CICERO, that I may quote one inſtance out of thouſands, and that I may do juſtice to the general character of that great man, whoſe particular failing I have cenſured ſo

freely; CICERO, I ſay, was abandoned by OCTAVIUS, and maſſacred by ANTONY. But let any man read this fragment of ARELLIUS FUSCUS, and chuſe which he would wish to have been, the orator, or the triumvir? "Quoad humanum genus „ incolume manſerit, quamdiu uſus literis, honor „ ſummae eloquentiae pretium erit, quamdiu rerum „ natura aut fortuna ſteterit, aut memoria dura- „ verit, admirabile poſteris vigebis ingenium, et „ uno proſcriptus ſeculo, proſcribes Antonium om- „ nibus. „

THUS again, as to events that ſtand recorded in hiſtory, we ſee them all, we ſee them as they followed one another, or as they produced one another, cauſes or effects, immediate or remote. We are caſt back, as it were, into former ages: we live with the men who lived before us, and we inhabit countries that we never ſaw. Place is enlarged, and time prolonged, in this manner; ſo that the man who applies himſelf early to the ſtudy of hiſtory, may acquire in a few years, and before he ſets his foot abroad in the world, not only a more extended knowledge of mankind, but the experience of more centuries than any of the patriarchs ſaw. The events we are witneſſes of, in the courſe of the longeſt life, appear to us very often original, unprepared, ſingle, and un-relative, if I may uſe ſuch an expreſſion for want of a better in English; in French I would ſay iſolés: they appear ſuch very often, are called accidents, and looked on as the effects of chance; a word, by the way, which is in conſtant uſe, and has frequently no determinate meaning. We

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get over the preſent difficulty, we improve the momentary advantage, as well as we can, and we look no farther. Experience can carry us no farther; for experience can go a very little way back in diſcovering cauſes: and effects are not the objects of experience till they happen. From hence many errors in judgment, and by conſequence in conduct, neceſſarily ariſe. And here too lies the difference we are ſpeaking of between hiſtory and experience. The advantage on the ſide of the former is double. In ancient hiſtory as we have ſaid already, the examples are complete, which are incomplete in the courſe of experience. The beginning, the progreſſion, and the end appear, not of particular reigns, much leſs of particular enterprizes, or ſyſtems of policy alone, but of governments, of nations, of empires, and of all the various ſyſtems that have ſucceeded one another in the courſe of their duration. In modern hiſtory, the examples may be, and ſometimes are, incomplete; but they have this advantage when they are ſo, that they ſerve to render complete the examples of our own time. Experience is doubly defective; we are born too late to ſee the beginning, and we die too ſoon to ſee the end of many things. Hiſtory ſupplies both theſe defects. Modern hiſtory ſhews the cauſes, when experience preſents the effects alone: and ancient hiſtory enables us to gueſs at the effects, when experience preſents the cauſes alone. Let me explain my meaning by two examples of theſe kinds; one paſt, the other actually preſent.

WHEN the revolution of one thouſand ſix hundred and eighty-eight happened, few men then alive, I ſuppoſe, went farther in their ſearch after the cauſes of it, than the extravagant attempt of king JAMES againſt the religion and liberty of his people. His former conduct, and the paſſages of king CHARLES the ſecond's reign might rankle ſtill at the hearts of ſome men, but could not be ſet to account among the cauſes of his depoſition; ſince he had ſucceeded, notwithſtanding them, peaceably to the throne: and the nation in general, even many of thoſe who would have excluded him from it, were deſirous, or at leaſt, willing, that he ſhould continue in it. Now this example, thus ſtated, affords, no doubt, much good inſtruction to the kings, and people of Britain. But this inſtruction is not entire, becauſe the example thus ſtated, and confined to the experience of that age, is imperfect. King JAMES's maladminiſtration rendered a revolution neceſſary and practicable; but his mal-adminiſtration, as well as all his preceding conduct, was cauſed by his bigot-attachment to popery, and to the principles of arbitrary government, from which no warning could divert him. His bigot-attachment to theſe was cauſed, by the exile of the royal family, this exile was cauſed by the uſurpation of CROMWEL: and CROMWEL'S uſurpation was the effect of a former rebellion, begun not without reaſon on account of liberty, but without any valid pretence on account of religion. During this exile, our princes caught the taint of popery and foreign

politics. We made them unfit to govern us, and after that were forced to recal them that they might reſcue us out of anarchy. It was neceſſary therefore, your lordship ſees, at the revolution, and it is more ſo now, to go back in hiſtory, at leaſt as far as I have mentioned, and perhaps farther, even to the beginning of King JAMES the firſt's reign, to render this event a complete example, and to develop all the wiſe, honeſt, and ſalutary precepts, with which it is pregnant, both to king and ſubject.

THE other example shall be taken from what has ſucceeded the revolution. Few men at that time looked forward enough, to foreſee the neceſſary conſequences of the new conſtitution of the revenue, that was ſoon afterwards formed; nor of the method of funding that immediately took place; which, abſurd as they are, have continued ever ſince, till it is become ſcarce poſſible to alter them. Few people, I ſay, foreſaw how the creation of funds, and the multiplication of taxes, would encreaſe yearly the power of the crown, and bring our liberties, by a natural and neceſſary progreſſion, into more real, though leſs apparent danger, than they were in before the revolution. The exceſſive ill husbandry practiſed form the very beginning of king WILLIAM's reign, and which laid the foundations of all we feel and all we fear, was not the effect of ignorance, miſtake, or what we call chance, but of deſign and ſcheme in thoſe who had the ſway at that time. I am not ſo uncha-

ritable, however, as to believe that they intended to bring upon their country all the miſchiefs that we, who came after them, experience, and apprehend. No, they ſaw the meaſures they took ſingly, and unrelatively, or relatively alone to ſome immediate object. The notion of attaching men to the new government, by tempting them to embark their fortunes on the ſame bottom, was a reaſon of ſtate to ſome: the notion of creating a new, that is, a moneyed intereſt, in oppoſition to the landed intereſt, or as a balance to it, and of acquiring a ſuperior influence in the city of London at leaſt by the eſtabliſhment of great corporations, was a reaſon of party to others: and I make no doubt that the opportunity of amaſſing immenſe eſtates by the management of funds, by trafficking in paper, and by all the arts of jobbing, was a reaſon of private intereſt to thoſe who ſupported and improved this ſcheme of iniquity, if not to thoſe who deviſed it. They looked no farther. Nay, we who came after them, and have long taſted the bitter fruits of the corruption they planted, were far from taking ſuch an alarm at our diſtreſs, and our danger, as they deſerved; till the moſt remote and fatal effect of cauſes, laid by the laſt generation, was very near becoming an object of experience in this. Your lordſhip, I am ſure, ſees at once how much a due reflection on the paſſages of former times, as they ſtand recorded in the hiſtory of our own, and of other countries, would have deterred a free people from truſting the ſole management of ſo great a

revenue, and the ſole nomination of thoſe legions of officers employed in it, to their chief magiſtrate. There remained indeed no pretence for doing ſo, when once a ſalary was ſettled on the prince, and the public revenue was no longer in any ſenſe his revenue, nor the public expence his expence. Give me leave to add, that it would have been, and would be ſtill, more decent with regard to the prince, and leſs repugnant if not more conformable to the principles and practice too of our government, to take this power and influence from the prince, or to share it with him; than to exclude men from the privilege of repreſenting their fellow-ſubjects who would chuſe them in parliament, purely becauſe they are employed and truſted by the prince.

YOUR lordship ſees not only, how much a due reflection upon the experience of other ages and countries would have pointed out national corruption, as the natural and neceſſary conſequence of inveſting the crown with the management of ſo great a revenue; but alſo the loſs of liberty, as the natural and neceſſary conſequence of national corruption.

THESE two examples explain ſufficiently what they are intended to explain. It only remains therefore upon this head, to obſerve the difference between the two manners in which hiſtory ſupplies the defects of our own experience. It ſhews us cauſes as in fact they were laid, with their immediate effects: and it enables us to gueſs at future

events. It can do no more, in the nature of things. My lord BACON, in his ſecond book of the Advancement of learning, having in his mind, I ſuppoſe, what PHILO and JOSEPHUS aſſerted of MOSES, affirms divine hiſtory to have this prerogative, that the narration may be before the fact as well as after. But ſince the ages of prophecy, as well as miracles, are paſt, we muſt content ourſelves to gueſs at what will be, by what has been: we have no other means in our power, and hiſtory furnishes us with theſe. How we are to improve, and apply theſe means, as well as how we are to acquire them, shall be deduced more particularly in another letter.

OF THE

STUDY of HISTORY.

LETTER III.

1. An objection againſt the utility of hiſtory removed. 2. The falſe and true aims of thoſe who ſtudy it. 3. Of the hiſtory of the firſt ages, with reflections on the ſtate of ancient hiſtory, prophane and ſacred.

WERE theſe letters to fall into the hands of ſome ingenious perſons who adorn the age we live in, your lordship's correſpondent would be joked upon for his project of improving men in virtue and wiſdom by the ſtudy of hiſtory. The general characters of men it would be ſaid, are determined by their natural conſtitutions, as their particular actions are by immediate objects. Many very converſant in hiſtory would be cited, who have proved ill men, or bad politicians; and a long roll would be produced of others, who have arrived at a great pitch of private, and public virtue, without any aſſiſtance of this kind. Something has been ſaid already to anticipate this objection; but, ſince I have heard ſeveral perſons affirm ſuch propoſitions with great confidence, a loud laugh, or a ſilent ſneer at the pedants who preſumed to think otherwiſe; I will ſpend a few paragraphs, with your lordship's leave, to shew that ſuch affirmations, for to affirm amongſt theſe

fine

fine men is to reaſon, either prove too much, or prove nothing.

IF our general characters were determined abſolutely, as they are certainly influenced, by our conſtitutions, and if our particular actions were ſo by immediate objects; all inſtruction by precept, as well as example, and all endeavours to form the moral character by education, would be unneceſſary. Even the little care that is taken, and ſurely it is impoſſible to take leſs, in the training up our youth, would be too much. But the truth is widely different from this repreſentation of it; for, what is vice, and what is virtue? I ſpeak of them in a large and philoſophical ſenſe. The former, is, I think, no more than the exceſs, abuſe, and miſapplication of appetites, deſires, and paſſions, natural and innocent, nay uſeful and neceſſary. The latter conſiſts in the moderation and government, in the uſe and application of theſe appetites, deſires, and paſſions, according to the rules of reaſon, and therefore, often in oppoſition to their own blind impulſe.

WHAT now is education? that part; that principal and moſt neglected part of it, I mean, which tends to form the moral character? It is, I think, an inſtitution deſigned to lead men from their tender years, by precept and example, by argument and authority, to the practice, and to the habit of practiſing theſe rules. The ſtronger our appetites, deſires, and paſſions are, the harder indeed is the task of education: but when the efforts of education are proportioned to this

ſtrength, although our keeneſt appetites and deſires, and our ruling paſſions cannot be reduced to a quiet and uniform ſubmiſſion, yet, are not their exceſſes aſſuaged? are not their abuſes and miſapplications, in ſome degree, diverted or checked? Though the pilot cannot lay the ſtorm, cannot he carry the ship, by his art, better through it, and often prevent the wreck that would always happen, without him? If ALEXANDER, who loved wine, and was naturally choleric, had been bred under the ſeverity of Roman diſcipline, it is probable he would neither have made a bonfire of Perſepolis for his whore, nor have killed his friend. If SCIPIO, who was naturally given to women, for which anecdote we have, if I miſtake not, the authority of POLYBIUS, as well as ſome verſes of NAEVIUS preſerved by A. GELLIUS, had been educated by OLYMPIAS at the court of PHILIP, it is improbable that he would have reſtored the beautiful Spaniard. In short, if the renowned SOCRATES had not corrected nature by art, this firſt apoſtle of the gentiles had been a very profligate fellow, by his own confeſſion; for he was inclined to all the vices ZOPYRUS imputed to him, as they ſay, on the obſervation of his phyſiognomy.

WITH him therefore, who denies the effects of education, it would be in vain to diſpute; and with him who admits them, there can be no diſpute, concerning that share which I aſcribe to the ſtudy of hiſtory, in forming our moral characters, and making us better men. The very perſons who pretend that inclinations cannot be reſtrained, nor habits corrected, againſt our natural bent,

would be the firſt perhaps to prove, in certain caſes, the contrary. A fortune at court, or the favour of a lady, have prevailed on many to conceal, and they could not conceal without reſtraining, which is one ſtep towards correcting, the vices they were by nature addicted to the moſt. Shall we imagine now, that the beauty of virtue and the deformity of vice, the charms of a bright and laſting reputation, the terror of being delivered over as criminals to all poſterity, the real benefit ariſing from a conſcientious diſcharge of the duty we owe to others, which benefit fortune can neither hinder nor take away, and the reaſonableneſs of conforming ourſelves to the deſigns of GOD manifeſted in the conſtitution of the human nature; ſhall we imagine, I ſay, that all theſe are not able to acquire the ſame power over thoſe who are continually called upon to a contemplation of them, and they who apply themſelves to the ſtudy of hiſtory are ſo called upon, as other motives, mean and ſordid in compariſon of theſe, can uſurp on other men?

2. That the ſtudy of hiſtory, far from making us wiſer, and more uſeful citizens, as well as better men, may be of no advantage whatſoever; that it may ſerve to render us mere antiquaries and ſcholars; or that it may help to make us forward coxcombs, and prating pedants, I have already allowed. But this is not the fault of hiſtory: and to convince us that it is not, we need only contraſt the true uſe of hiſtory with the uſe that is made of it by ſuch men as theſe. We

ought always to keep in mind, that hiſtory is philoſophy teaching by examples how to conduct ourſelves in all the ſituations of private and public life; that therefore we muſt apply ourſelves to it in a philoſophical ſpirit and manner; that we muſt riſe from particular to general knowledge, and that we muſt fit ourſelves for the ſociety and buſineſs of mankind by accuſtoming our minds to reflect and meditate on the characters we find deſcribed, and the courſe of events we find related there. Particular examples may be of uſe ſometimes in particular caſes; but the application of them is dangerous. It muſt be done with the utmoſt circumſpection, or it will be ſeldom done with ſucceſs. And yet one would think that this was the principal uſe of the ſtudy of hiſtory, by what has been written on the ſubject. I know not whether MACHIAVEL himſelf is quite free from defect on this account: he ſeems to carry the uſe and application of particular examples ſometimes too far. MARIUS and CATULUS paſſed the Alps, met, and defeated the Cimbri beyond the frontiers of Italy. Is it ſafe to conclude from hence, that whenever one people is invaded by another, the invaded ought to meet and fight the invaders at a diſtance from their frontiers? MACHIAVEL'S countryman, GUICCIARDIN, was aware of the danger that might ariſe from ſuch an application of examples. PETER of Medicis had involved himſelf in great difficulties, when thoſe wars and calamities began which LEWIS SFORZA firſt drew and entailed on Italy, by flattering the ambition of CHARLES the eighth in order to gra-

tify his own, and calling the French into that country. PETER owed his diſtreſs to his folly in departing from the general tenor of conduct his father LAURENCE had held, and hoped to relieve himſelf by imitating his father's example in one particular inſtance. At a time when the wars with the pope and king of Naples had reduced LAURENCE to circumſtances of great danger, he took the reſolution of going to FERDINAND, and of treating in perſon with that prince. The reſolution appears in hiſtory imprudent and almoſt deſperate: were we informed of the ſecret reaſons on which this great man acted, it would appear very poſſibly a wiſe and ſafe meaſure. It ſucceeded, and LAURENCE brought back with him public peace, and private ſecurity. As ſoon as the French troops entered the dominions of Florence, PETER was ſtruck with a panic terror, went to CHARLES the eighth, put the port of Leghorn, the fortreſſes of Piſa, and all the keys of the country, into this prince's hands; whereby he diſarmed the Florentine commonwealth, and ruined himſelf. He was deprived of his authority, and driven out of the city, by the juſt indignation of the magiſtrates and people: and in the treaty which they made afterwards with the king of France, it was ſtipulated, that PETER ſhould not remain within an hundred miles of the ſtate, nor his brothers within the ſame diſtance of the city of Florence. On this occaſion GUICCIARDIN obſerves how dangerous it is to govern ourſelves by particular examples; ſince, to have the ſame ſucceſs, we muſt have the

ſame prudence, and the ſame fortune; and ſince the example muſt not only anſwer the caſe before us in general, but in every minute circumſtance. This is the ſenſe of that admirable hiſtorian, and theſe are his words — " é ſenza dubbio molto „ pericoloſo il governarſi con gl' eſempi, ſe non „ concorrono, non ſolo in generale, ma in tutti li „ particolari, le medeſime ragioni; ſe le coſe non „ ſono regolate colla medeſima prudenza, e ſe „ oltre a tutti gli altri fondamenti, non, v'ha la „ parte ſua la medeſima fortuna." An obſervation that BOILEAU makes, and a rule he lays down in ſpeaking of translations, will properly find their place here, and ſerve to explain ſtill better what I would eſtabliſh. " To translate ſervilely into mo- „ dern language an ancient author phraſe by phraſe, „ and word by word, is prepoſterous: nothing can „ be more unlike the original than ſuch a copy. „ It is not to ſhew, it is to diſguiſe the author, „ and he who has known him only in this dreſs, „ would not know him in his own. A good writer, „ inſtead of taking this inglorious and unprofitable „ task upon him, will jouſter contre l'original, „ rather imitate than translate, and rather emulate „ than imitate: he will transfuſe the ſenſe and „ ſpirit of the original into his own work, and „ will endeavour to write as the ancient author „ would have wrote, had he writ in the ſame „ language." Now, to improve by examples is to improve by imitation. We muſt catch the ſpirit, if we can, and conform ourſelves to the reaſon of them; but we muſt not affect to translate ſervilely into our conduct, if your lordſhip will allow me

the expreſſion, the particular conduct of thoſe good and great men, whoſe images hiſtory ſets before us. CODRUS and the DECII devoted themſelves to death: one, becauſe an oracle had foretold that the army whoſe general was killed would be victorious; the others in compliance with a ſuperſtition that bore great analogy to a ceremony practiſed in the old Egyptian church, and added afterwards, as many others of the ſame origin were, to the ritual of the Iſraelites. Theſe are examples of great magnanimity, to be ſure, and of magnanimity employed in the moſt worthy cauſe. In the early days of the Athenian and Roman government, when the credit of oracles and all kinds of ſuperſtition prevailed, when heaven was piously thought to delight in blood and even human blood was ſhed under wild notions of atonement, propitiation, purgation, expiation, and ſatisfaction; they who ſet ſuch examples as theſe, acted an heroical and a rational part too. But if a general ſhould act the ſame part now, and, in order to ſecure his victory, get killed as faſt as he could, he might paſs for an hero, but, I am ſure, he would paſs for a madman. Even theſe examples, however, are of uſe: they excite us at leaſt to venture our lives freely in the ſervice of our country, by propoſing to our imitation men who devoted themſelves to certain death in the ſervice of theirs. They ſhew us what a turn of imagination can operate, and how the greateſt trifle, nay the greateſt abſurdity, dreſſed up in the ſolemn airs of religion, can carry order and confidence, or the

contrary ſentiments, into the breaſts of thouſands.

THERE are certain general principles, and rules of life and conduct, which always muſt be true, becauſe they are conformable to the invariable nature of things. He who ſtudies hiſtory as he would ſtudy philoſophy, will ſoon diſtinguish and collect them, and by doing ſo will ſoon form to himſelf a general ſyſtem of ethics and politics on the ſureſt foundations, on the trial of theſe principles and rules in all ages, and on the confirmation of them by univerſal experience. I ſaid he will diſtinguish them; for once more I muſt ſay, that as to particular modes of actions, and meaſures of conduct, which the cuſtoms of different countries, the manners of different ages, and the circumſtances of different conjunctures, have appropriated, as it were; it is always ridiculous, or imprudent and dangerous to employ them. But this is not all. By contemplating the vaſt variety of particular characters and events; by examining the ſtrange combinations of cauſes, different, remote and ſeemingly oppoſite, that often concur in producing one effect; and the ſurpriſing fertility of one ſingle and uniform cauſe in the producing of a multitude of effects as different, as remote, and ſeemingly as oppoſite; by tracing carefully, as carefully as if the ſubject he conſiders were of perſonal and immediate concern to him, all the minute and ſometimes ſcarce perceivable circumſtances, either in the characters of actors, or in the courſe of actions, that hiſtory enables him to trace, and according to which the ſucceſs of affairs, even the

greateſt, is moſtly determined; by theſe, and ſuch methods as theſe, for I might deſcend into a much greater detail, a man of parts may improve the ſtudy of hiſtory to it's proper and principal uſe; he may sharpen the penetration, fix the attention of his mind, and ſtrengthen his judgment; he may acquire the faculty and the habit of diſcerning quicker, and looking farther; and of exerting that flexibility, and ſteadineſs, which are neceſſary to be joined in the conduct of all affairs that depend on the concurrence or oppoſition of other men.

Mr. LOCKE, I think, recommends the ſtudy of geometry even to thoſe who have no deſign of being geometricians: and he gives a reaſon for it, that may be applied to the preſent caſe. Such perſons may forget every problem that has been propoſed, and every ſolution that they or others have given; but the habit of purſuing long trains of ideas will remain with them, and they will appear through the mazes of ſophiſm, and diſcover a latent truth, where perſons who have not this habit will never find it.

IN this manner, the ſtudy of hiſtory will prepare us for action and obſervation. Hiſtory is the ancient author: experience is the modern language. We form our taſte on the firſt; we translate the ſenſe and reaſon, we transfuſe the ſpirit and force; but we imitate only the particular graces of the original: we imitate them according to the idiom of our own tongue, that is, we ſubſtitute often equivalents in the lieu of them, and are far from affecting to copy them ſervilely. To conclude, as

experience is converſant about the preſent, and the preſent enables us to gueſs at the future; ſo hiſtory is converſant about the paſt, and by knowing the things that have been, we become better able to judge of the things that are.

THIS uſe, my lord, which I make the proper and principal uſe of the ſtudy of hiſtory, is not inſiſted on by thoſe who have writ concerning the method to be followed in this ſtudy: and ſince we propoſe different ends, we muſt of courſe take different ways. Few of their treatiſes have fallen into my hands: one, the method of BODIN, a man famous in his time, I remember to have read. I took it up with much expectation many years ago; I went through it, and remained extremely diſappointed. He might have given almoſt any other title to his book as properly as that which ſtands before it. There are not many pages in it that relate any more to his ſubject than a tedious fifth chapter, wherein he accounts for the characters of nations according to their poſitions on the globe, and according to the influence of the ſtars; and aſſures his reader that nothing can be more neceſſary than ſuch a diſquiſition, "ad univerſam hiſtoriarum cogni-„ tionem, et incorruptum earum judicium." In his method, we are to take firſt a general view of univerſal hiſtory, and chronology, in short abſtracts, and then to ſtudy all particular hiſtories and ſyſtems. SENECA ſpeaks of men who ſpend their whole lives in learning how to act in life, "dum vitae „ inſtrumenta conquirunt." I doubt that this method of BODIN would conduct us in the ſame, or

as bad a way; would leave us no time for action, or would make us unfit for it. A huge common place book, wherein all the remarkable ſayings and facts that we find in hiſtory are to be regiſtered, may enable a man to talk or write like BODIN, but will never make him a better man, nor enable him to promote, like an uſeful citizen, the ſecurity, the peace, the welfare, or the grandeur of the community to which he belongs. I ſhall proceed therefore to ſpeak of a method that leads to ſuch purpoſes as theſe directly and certainly, without any regard to the methods that have been preſcribed by others.

I THINK then we muſt be on our guard againſt this very affectation of learning, and this very wantonneſs of curioſity, which the examples and precepts we commonly meet with are calculated to flatter and indulge. We muſt neither dwell too long in the dark, nor wander about till we loſe our way in the light. We are too apt to carry ſyſtems of philoſophy beyond all our ideas, and ſyſtems of hiſtory beyond all our memorials. The philoſopher begins with reaſon, and ends with imagination. The hiſtorian inverts this order: he begins without memorials and he ſometimes ends with them. This ſilly cuſtom is ſo prevalent among men of letters who apply themſelves to the ſtudy of hiſtory, and has ſo much prejudice and ſo much authority on the ſide of it, that your lordſhip muſt give me leave to ſpeak a little more particularly and plainly than I have done, in favor of common ſenſe, againſt an abſurdity which is almoſt ſanctified.

REFLECTIONS

On the ſtate of ancient HISTORY.

THE nature of man, and the conſtant courſe of human affairs, render it impoſſible that the firſt ages of any new nation which forms itſelf, ſhould afford authentic materials for hiſtory. We have none ſuch concerning the originals of any of thoſe nations that actually ſubſiſt. Shall we expect to find them concerning the originals of nations diſperſed, or extinguiſhed, two or three thouſand years ago? If a thread of dark and uncertain traditions, therefore, is made, as it commonly is, the introduction to hiſtory, we ſhould touch it lightly, and run ſwiftly over it, far from inſiſting on it, either as authors or readers. Such introductions are at beſt no more than fanciful preludes, that try the inſtruments, and precede the concert. He muſt be void of judgment, and taſte, one would think, who can take the firſt for true hiſtory, or the laſt for true harmony. And yet ſo it has been, and ſo it is, not in Germany and Holland alone; but in Italy, in France, and in England, where genius has abounded, and taſte has been long refined. Our great ſcholars have dealt and deal in fables at leaſt as much as our poets, with this difference to the diſadvantage of the former, to whom I may apply the remark as juſtly as SENECA applied it to the dialecticians — "triſtius „ inepti ſunt. Illi ex profeſſo laſciviunt; hi agere „ ſeipſos aliquid exiſtimant." Learned men, in learned and inquiſitive ages, who poſſeſſed many

advantages that we have not, and among others that of being placed ſo many centuries nearer the original truths that are the objects of ſo much laborious ſearch, deſpaired of finding them, and gave fair warning to poſterity, if poſterity would have taken it. The ancient geographers, as PLUTARCH ſays in the life of THESEUS, when they laid down in their maps the little extent of ſea and land that was known to them, left great ſpaces void. In ſome of theſe ſpaces they wrote, Here are ſandy deſarts, in others, Here are impaſſable marshes, Here is a chain of inhoſpitable mountains, or Here is a frozen ocean. Juſt ſo, both he and other hiſtorians, when they related fabulous originals, were not wanting to ſet out the bounds beyond which there was neither hiſtory nor chronology. CENSORINUS has preſerved the diſtinction of three aeras eſtabliſhed by VARRO. This learned Roman antiquary did not determine whether the firſt period had any beginning, but fixed the end of it at the firſt, that is, according to him, the Ogygian, deluge; which he placed, I think, ſome centuries backwarder than JULIUS AFRICANUS thought fit to place it afterwards. To this aera of abſolute darkneſs he ſuppoſed that a kind of twilight ſucceeded, from the Ogygian deluge to the Olympic aera, and this he called the fabulous age. From this vulgar aera when CORAEBUS was crowned victor, and long after the true aera when theſe games were inſtituted by IPHITUS, the Greeks pretend to be able to digeſt their hiſtory with ſome order, clearneſs,

and certainty: VARRO therefore looked on it as the break of day, or the beginning of the hiſtorical age. He might do ſo the rather, perhaps, becauſe he included by it the date he likewiſe fixed, or, upon recollection, that the elder CATO had fixed, of the foundation of Rome within the period from which he ſuppoſed that hiſtorical truth was to be found. But yet moſt certain it is, that the hiſtory and chronology of the ages that follow are as confuſed and uncertain, as the hiſtory and chronology of thoſe which immediately precede this aera.

1. The ſtate of ancient profane hiſtory.

THE Greeks did not begin to write in proſe till PHERECIDES of SYROS introduced the cuſtom: and CADMUS MILESIUS was their firſt hiſtorian. Now theſe men flouriſhed long after the true, or even the vulgar Olympic aera; for JOSEPHUS affirms, and in this he has great probability on his ſide, that CADMUS MILESIUS, and ACUSILAUS ARGIVUS, in a word the oldeſt hiſtorians in Greece, were very little more ancient than the expedition of the Perſians againſt the Greeks. As ſeveral centuries paſſed between the Olympic aera and theſe firſt hiſtorians, there paſſed likewiſe ſeveral more between theſe and the firſt Greek chronologers. TIMAEUS about the time of PTOLOMY PHILADELPHUS, and ERATOSTHENES about that of PTOLOMY EVERGETES, ſeem firſt to have digeſted the events recorded by them, according to the olympiads. Precedent writers mentioned

ſometimes the olympiads; but this rule of reckoning was not brought into eſtabliſhed uſe ſooner. The rule could not ſerve to render hiſtory more clear and certain till it was followed: it was not followed till about five hundred years after the Olympic aera. There remains therefore no pretence to place the beginning of the hiſtorical age ſo high as VARRO placed it, by five hundred years.

HELLANICUS indeed and others pretended to give the originals of cities and governments, and to deduce their narrations from great antiquity. Their works are loſt, but we can judge how inconſiderable the loſs is, by the writings of that age which remain, and by the report of thoſe who had ſeen the others. For inſtance, HERODOTUS was cotemporary with HELLANICUS. HERODOTUS was inquiſitive enough in all conſcience, and propoſed to publish all he could learn of the antiquities of the Ionians, Lydians, Phrygians, Egyptians, Babylonians, Medes, and Perſians; that is, of almoſt all the nations who were known in his time to exiſt. If he wrote Aſſyriacs, we have them not; but we are ſure that this word was uſed proverbially to ſignify fabulous legends, ſoon after his time, and when the mode of publishing ſuch relations and hiſtories prevailed among the Greeks.

IN the nine books we have, he goes back indeed almoſt to the Olympic aera, without taking notice of it however; but he goes back only to tell an old woman's tale, of a king who loſt his

crown for shewing his wife naked to his favourite; and from CANDAULES and GYGES he haſtens, or rather he takes a great leap, down to CYRUS.

SOMETHING like a thread of hiſtory of the Medes and then of the Perſians, to the flight of XERXES, which happened in his own time, is carried on. The events of his own time are related with an air of hiſtory. But all accounts of the Greeks as well as the Perſians, which precede theſe, and all the accounts which he gives occaſionally of other nations, were drawn up moſt manifeſtly on broken, perplexed, and doubtful ſcraps of tradition. He had neither original records, nor any authentic memorials to guide him, and yet theſe are the ſole foundations of true hiſtory. HERODOTUS flouriſhed, I think, little more than half a century, and XENOPHON little more than a whole century, after the death of CYRUS: and yet how various and repugnant are the relations made by theſe two hiſtorians, of the birth, life, and death of this prince? If moſt hiſtories had come down from theſe ages to ours, the uncertainty and inutility of them all would be but the more manifeſt. We ſhould find that ACUSILAUS rejected the traditions of HESIOD, that HELLANICUS contradicted ACUSILAUS, that EPHORUS accuſed HELLANICUS, that TIMAEUS accuſed EPHORUS, and all poſterior writers TIMAEUS. This is the report of JOSEPHUS. But, in order to ſhew the ignorance and falſhood of all thoſe writers through whom the traditions of profane antiquity came to the Greeks, I will quote to your lordſhip a much

better

better authority than that of JOSEPHUS; the authority of one who had no prejudice to bias him, no particular cauſe to defend, nor ſyſtem of ancient hiſtory to eſtabliſh, and all the helps, as well as talents, neceſſary to make him a competent judge. The man I mean is STRABO.

SPEAKING of the Maſſagetae in his eleventh book, he writes to this effect: that no author had given a true account of them, though ſeveral had writ of the war that CYRUS waged againſt them; and that hiſtorians had found as little credit in what they had related concerning the affairs of the Perſians, Medes, and Syrians: that this was due to their folly; for obſerving that thoſe who wrote fables profeſſedly were held in eſteem, theſe men imagined they ſhould render their writings more agreeable, if, under the appearance and pretence of true hiſtory, they related what they had neither ſeen nor heard from perſons able to give them true information; and that accordingly their only aim had been to dreſs up pleaſing and marvellous relations: that one may better give credit to HESIOD and HOMER, when they talk of their heroes, nay even to dramatic poets, than to CTESIAS, HERODOTUS, HELLANICUS, and their followers: that it is not ſave to give credit even to the greateſt part of the hiſtorians who writ concerning ALEXANDER; ſince they too, encouraged by the greater reputation of this conqueror, by the diſtance to which he carried his arms, and by the difficulty of diſproving what they ſaid of actions performed in regions ſo remote, were apt

to deceive: that indeed when the Roman empire on one ſide, and the Parthian on the other, came to extend themſelves, the truth of things grew to be better known.

YOU ſee, my lord, not only how late profane hiſtory began to be writ by the Greeks, but how much later it began to be writ with any regard to truth; and conſequently what wretched materials the learned men, who aroſe after the age of ALEXANDER, had to employ, when they attempted to form ſyſtems of ancient hiſtory and chronology. We have ſome remains of that laborious compiler DIODORUS SICULUS, but do we find in him any thread of ancient hiſtory, I mean, that which paſſed for ancient in his time? What complaints, on the contrary, does he not make of former hiſtorians? how frankly does he confeſs the little and uncertain light he had to follow in his reſearches? Yet DIODORUS, as well as PLUTARCH, and others, had not only the older Greek hiſtorians, but the more modern antiquaries, who pretended to have ſearched into the records and regiſters of nations; even at that time renowned for their antiquity. BEROSUS, for inſtance, and MANETHO, one a Babylonian and the other an Egyptian prieſt, had published the antiquities of their countries in the time of the PTOLEMYS. BEROSUS pretended to give the hiſtory of four hundred and eighty years. PLINY, if I remember right, for I ſay this on memory, ſpeaks to this effect in the ſixth book of his Natural Hiſtory: and if it was ſo, theſe years were probably years

of NABONASSAR. MANETHO began his hiſtory, God knows when, from the progreſs of ISIS, or ſome other as well aſcertained period. He followed the Egyptian traditions of dynaſties of Gods and Demi-Gods; and derived his anecdotes from the firſt MERCURY, who had inſcribed them in ſacred characters, on antediluvian pillars, antediluvian at leaſt according to our received chronology, from which the ſecond MERCURY, had tranſcribed them, and inſerted them into his works. We have not theſe antiquities; for the monk of VITERBO was ſoon detected: and if we had them, they would either add to our uncertainty, and encreaſe the chaos of learning, or tell us nothing worth our knowledge. For thus I reaſon. Had they given particular and hiſtorical accounts conformable to the ſcriptures of the Jews, JOSEPHUS, JULIUS AFRICANUS, and EUSEBIUS would have made quite other extracts from their writings, and would have altered and contradicted them leſs. The accounts they gave, therefore, were repugnant to ſacred writ, or they were defective: they would have eſtabliſhed pyrrhoniſm, or have baulked our curioſity.

2. Of ſacred hiſtory.

WHAT memorials therefore remain to give us light into the originals of ancient nations, and the hiſtory of thoſe ages, we commonly call the firſt ages? The Bible, it will be ſaid; that is, the

hiſtorical part of it in the Old Teſtament. But, my lord, even theſe divine books muſt be reputed inſufficient to the purpoſe, by every candid and impartial man who conſiders either their authority as hiſtories, or the matter they contain. For what are they? and how came they to us? At the time when ALEXANDER carried his arms into Aſia, a people of Syria, till then unknown, became known to the Greeks: this people had been ſlaves to the Egyptians, Aſſyrians, Medes, and Perſians, as theſe ſeveral empires prevailed: ten parts in twelve of them had been tranſplanted by ancient conquerors, and melted down and loſt in the eaſt, ſeveral ages before the eſtabliſhment of the empire that ALEXANDER deſtroyed: the other two parts had been carried captive to Babylon a little before the ſame aera. This captivity was not indeed, perpetual, like the other; but it laſted ſo long, and ſuch circumſtances, whatever they were, accompanied it, that the captives forgot their country, and even their language, the Hebrew dialect at leaſt and character: and a few of them only could be wrought upon, by the zeal of ſome particular men, to return home, when the indulgence of the Perſian monarchs gave them leave to rebuild their city and to repeople their ancient patrimony. Even this remnant of the nation did not continue long entire. Another great tranſmigration followed; and the Jews, that ſettled under the protection of the PTOLEMYS, forgot their language in Egypt, as the forefathers of theſe Jews had forgot theirs in Chaldea. More attached however to their religion

in Egypt, for reaſons eaſy to be deduced from the new inſtitutions that prevailed after the captivity among them, than their anceſtors had been in Chaldea, a verſion of their ſacred writings was made into Greek at Alexandria, not long after the canon of theſe ſcriptures had been finished at Jeruſalem; for many years could not intervene between the death of SIMON the juſt, by whom this canon was finished, if he died during the reign of PTOLEMY SOTER, and the beginning of this famous translation under PTOLEMY PHILADELPHUS. The Helleniſt Jews reported as many marvellous things to authorize, and even to ſanctify this translation, as the other Jews had reported about ESDRAS who began, and SIMON the juſt who finished, the canon of their ſcriptures. Theſe holy romances slid into tradition, and tradition became hiſtory: the fathers of our chriſtian church did not diſdain to employ them. St. JEROME, for inſtance, laughed at the ſtory of the ſeventy-two elders, whoſe translations were found to be, upon compariſon, word for word the ſame, though made ſeparately, and by men who had no communication with one another. But the ſame St. JEROME, in the ſame place, quotes ARISTEAS, one of the guard of PTOLEMY PHILADELPHUS, as a real perſonage.

THE account pretended to be writ by this ARISTEAS, of all that paſſed relating to the translation, was enough for his purpoſe. This he retained, and he rejected only the more improbable circumſtances, which had been added to the tale, and which laid it open to moſt ſuſpicion. In this

he shewed great prudence, and better judgment, than that zealous, but weak apologiſt JUSTIN, who believed the whole ſtory himſelf, and endeavoured to impoſe it on mankind.

THUS you ſee, my lord, that when we conſider theſe books barely as hiſtories, delivered to us on the faith of a ſuperſtitious people among whom the cuſtom and art of pious lying prevailed remarkably, we may be allowed to doubt whether greater credit is to be given to what they tell us concerning the original, compiled in their own country and as it were out of the ſight of the reſt of the world, than we know, with ſuch a certainty as no ſcholar preſumes to deny, that we ought to give to what they tell us concerning the copy?

THE Helleniſt Jews were extremely pleaſed, no doubt, to have their ſcriptures in a language they underſtood, and that might ſpread the fame of their antiquity, and do honor to their nation, among their maſters the Greeks. But yet we do not find that the authority of theſe books prevailed, or that even they were much known among the Pagan world. The reaſon of this cannot be, that the Greeks admired nothing that was not of their own growth, "ſua tantum mirantur:" for, on the contrary, they were inquiſitive and credulous in the higheſt degree, and they collected and published at leaſt as many idle traditions of other nations, as they propagated of their own. JOSEPHUS pretended that THEOPOMPUS, a diſciple of ISOCRATES, being about to inſert in his hiſtory ſome things he had taken out of holy writ, the

poor man became troubled in mind for ſeveral days; and that having prayed to GOD, during an intermiſſion of his illneſs, to reveal to him the cauſe of it, he learned in his ſleep that this attempt was the cauſe; upon which he quitted the deſign and was cured. If JOSEPHUS had been a little more conſiſtent than he is very often, ſuch a ſtory as this would not have been told by one, who was fond, as Jews and Chriſtians in general have been, to create an opinion that the Gentiles took not their hiſtory alone, but their philoſophy and all their valuable knowledge, from the Jews. Notwithſtanding this ſtory therefore, which is told in the fifteenth book of the Jewiſh Antiquities, and means nothing, or means to ſhew that the divine Providence would not ſuffer anecdotes of ſacred to be mingled with profane hiſtory; the practice of JOSEPHUS himſelf, and of all thoſe who have had the ſame deſign in view, has been to confirm the former by the latter, and at any rate to ſuppoſe an appearance at leaſt of conformity between them. We are told HECATAEUS ABDERITA, for there were two of that name, writ a hiſtory favorable to the Jews: and, not to multiply inſtances, though I might eaſily do it, even ALEXANDER POLYHISTOR is called in. He is quoted by JOSEPHUS, and praiſed by EUSEBIUS as a man of parts and great variety of learning. His teſtimony, about the deluge and tower of Babel, is produced by St. CYRIL in his firſt book againſt JULIAN: and JUSTIN the apologiſt and martyr, in his exhortation to the Greeks, makes uſe of the ſame

authority, among thoſe that mention MOSES as a leader and prince of the Jews. Though this POLYHISTOR, if I remember right what I think I have met with in SUIDAS, ſpoke only of a woman he called MOSO, "cujus ſcriptum eſt lex hebraeorum *." Had the Greek hiſtorians been conformable to the ſacred, I cannot ſee that their authority, which was not cotemporary, would have been of any weight. They might have copied MOSES, and ſo they did CTESIAS. But even this was not the caſe: whatever uſe a particular writer here and there might make occaſionally of the ſcriptures, certain it is that the Jews continued to be as much deſpiſed, and their hiſtory to be as generally neglected, nay almoſt as generally unknown, for a long time at leaſt after the verſion was made at Alexandria, as they had been before. APION, an Egyptian, a man of much erudition, appeared in the world ſome centuries afterwards. He wrote, among other antiquities, thoſe of his own country: and as he was obliged to ſpeak very often of the Jews, he ſpoke of them in a manner neither much to their honor, nor to that of their hiſtories. He wrote purpoſely againſt them: and JOSEPHUS attempted afterwards, but APION was then dead, to refute him. APION paſſed, I

* Μωσὼ, γυνὴ Ἑβραικὸ ἧς ἐστι σύγγραμμα ὁ πρὸ Ἑβραίοις νομος ὥς φησιν Ἀλέξανδρος ὁ Μιλήσιος ὁ Πολυΐστωρ. Sui. Lex. tom. ii. p. 583.

Ἀλέξανδρος . . . ὁ Πολυΐστωρ . . . συνέγραψε βιβλία ἀριθμῷ πρείττω, ἢ περὶ Ῥώμης βιβλία πέντε. ἐν τούτοις λέγει, ὡς γυνὴ γέγονεν Ἑβραία Μωσὼ, ἧς ἐστι σύγγραμμα ὁ πρὸ Ἑβραίοις νομος. Id. tom. i. p. 105. Edit. Cantab. 1725.

know, for a vain and noiſy pedant; but he paſſed likewiſe for a curious, a laborious, and a learned antiquary. If he was cabaliſtical or ſuperſtitious, JOSEPHUS was at leaſt as much ſo as he: and if he flattered CALIGULA, JOSEPHUS introduced himſelf to the court of NERO and the favour of POPPAEA, by no very honorable means, under the protection of ALITURUS, a player, and a Jew; to ſay nothing of his applying to VESPASIAN the prophecies concerning the Meſſiah, nor of his accompanying TITUS to the ſiege of Jeruſalem.

IN ſhort, my lord, the Jewiſh hiſtory never obtained any credit in the world, till chriſtianity was eſtabliſhed. The foundations of this ſyſtem being laid partly in theſe hiſtories, and in the prophecies joined to them or inſerted in them, chriſtianity has reflected back upon them an authority which they had not before, and this authority has prevailed wherever chriſtianity has ſpread. Both Jews and Chriſtians hold the ſame books in great veneration, whilſt each condemns the other for not underſtanding, or for abuſing them. But I apprehend that the zeal of both has done much hurt, by endeavouring to extend their authority much farther than is neceſſary for the ſupport perhaps of Judaiſm, but to be ſure of chriſtianity. I explain myſelf that I may offend no pious ear.

SIMON, in the preface to his Critical hiſtory of the Old teſtament, cites a divine of the faculty of Paris, who held that the inſpirations of the authors of thoſe books, which the church receives as the word of God, should be extended no farther

than to matters purely of doctrine, or to ſuch as have a near and neceſſary relation to theſe; and that whenever theſe authors writ on other ſubjects, ſuch as Egyptian, Aſſyrian, or other hiſtory, they had no more of the divine aſſiſtance than any other perſons of piety. This notion of inſpirations that came occaſionally, that illuminated the minds and guided the hands of the ſacred penmen while they were writing one page, and reſtrained their influence while the ſame authors were writing another, may be cavilled againſt: and what is there that may not? But ſurely it deſerves to be treated with reſpect, ſince it tends to eſtabliſh a diſtinction between the legal, doctrinal, or prophetical parts of the Bible, and the hiſtorical: without which diſtinction it is impoſſible to eſtabliſh the firſt, as evidently and as ſolidly as the intereſts of religion require: at leaſt it appears impoſſible to me, after having examined and conſidered, as well as I am able, all the trials of this kind that have been made by ſubtile as well as learned men. The Old is ſaid to be the foundation of the New, and ſo it is in one ſenſe: the ſyſtem of religion contained in the latter refers to the ſyſtem of religion contained in the former, and ſuppoſes the truth of it. But the authority on which we receive the books of the New teſtament, is ſo far from being founded on the authority of the Old teſtament, that it is quite independent on it; the New being proved, gives authority to the Old, but borrows none from it; and gives this authority to the particular parts only. CHRIST came to

fulfill the prophecies; but not to conſecrate all the written, any more than the oral, traditions of the Jews. We muſt believe theſe traditions as far as they relate to chriſtianity, as far as chriſtianity refers to them, or ſuppoſes them neceſſary; but we can be under no obligation to believe them any farther, ſince without chriſtianity we should be under no obligation to believe them at all.

IT has been ſaid by ABBADIE, and others, "That the accidents which have happened to „ alter the texts of the Bible, and to disfigure, „ if I may ſay ſo, the ſcriptures in many reſpects, „ could not have been prevented without a per- „ petual ſtanding miracle, and that a perpetual „ ſtanding miracle is not in the order of provi- „ dence." Now I can by no means ſubſcribe to this opinion. It ſeems evident to my reaſon that the very contrary muſt be true, if we ſuppoſe that GOD acts towards men according to the moral fitneſs of things: and if we ſuppoſe that he acts arbitrarily, we can form no opinion at all. I think that theſe accidents would not have happened, or that the ſcriptures would have been preſerved entirely in their genuine purity notwithſtanding theſe accidents, if they had been entirely dictated by the HOLY GHOST; and the proof of this probable propoſition, according to our cleareſt and moſt diſtinct ideas of wiſdom and moral fitneſs, is obvious and eaſy. But theſe ſcriptures are not ſo come down to us: they are come down broken and confuſed, full of additions, interpolations, and tranſpoſitions, made we neither know when, nor

by whom; and ſuch, in short, as never appeared on the face of any other book, on whoſe authority men have agreed to rely.

THIS being ſo, my lord, what hypotheſis shall we follow? Shall we adhere to ſome ſuch diſtinction as I have mentioned? Shall we ſay, for inſtance, that the ſcriptures were written originally by the authors to whom they are vulgarly aſcribed, but that theſe authors writ nothing by inſpiration, except the legal, the doctrinal, and the prophetical parts, and that in every other reſpect their authority is purely human, and therefore fallible? Or shall we ſay that theſe hiſtories are nothing more than compilations of old traditions, and abridgments of old records, made in later times, as they appear to every one who reads them without preposſeſſion, and with attention? Shall we add, that which ever of theſe probabilities be true, we may believe, conſiſtently with either, notwithſtanding the deciſion of any divines, who know no more than you or I, or any other man, of the order of providence, that all thoſe parts and paſſages of the Old teſtament, which contain prophecies, or matters of law or doctrine, and which were from the firſt of ſuch importance in the deſigns of providence to all future generations, and even to the whole race of mankind, have been from the firſt the peculiar care of providence? Shall we inſiſt that ſuch particular parts and paſſages, which are plainly marked out and ſufficiently confirmed by the ſyſtem of the Chriſtian revelation, and by the completion of the prophecies, have been preſerved

from corruption by ways impenetrable to us, amidſt all the changes and chances to which the books wherein they are recorded have been expoſed; and that neither original writers, nor later compilers, have been ſuffered to make any eſſential alterations, ſuch as would have falſified the law of GOD and the principles of the Jewish and Chriſtian religions, in any of theſe divine fundamental truths? Upon ſuch hypotheſes, we may aſſert without ſcruple, that the genealogies and hiſtories of the Old teſtament are in no reſpect ſufficient foundations for a chronology from the beginning of time, nor for univerſal hiſtory. But then the ſame hypotheſes will ſecure the infallibility of ſcripture authority as far as religion is concerned. Faith and reaſon may be reconciled a little better than they commonly are; I may deny that the Old teſtament is tranſmitted to us under all the conditions of an authentic hiſtory, and yet be at liberty to maintain that the paſſages in it which eſtablish original ſin, which ſeem favorable to the doctrine of the Trinity, which foretell the coming of the Meſſiah, and all others of ſimilar kind, are come down to us as they were originally dictated by the HOLY GHOST.

In attributing the whole credibility of the Old teſtament to the authority of the New, and in limiting the authenticity of the Jewish ſcriptures to thoſe parts alone that concern law, doctrine, and prophecy, by which their chronology and the far greateſt part of their hiſtory are excluded, I will venture to aſſure your lordship that I do

not aſſume ſo much, as is aſſumed in every hypotheſis that affixes the divine ſeal of inſpiration to the whole canon; that reſts the whole proof on Jewish veracity; and that pretends to account particularly and poſitively for the deſcent of theſe ancient writings in their preſent ſtate.

ANOTHER reaſon, for which I have inſiſted the rather on the diſtinction ſo often mentioned, is this. I think we may find very good foundation for it even in the Bible: and though this be a point very little attended to, and much diſguiſed, it would not be hard to ſhew, upon great inducements of probability, that the law and the hiſtory were far from being blended together as they now ſtand in the Pentateuch, even from the time of MOSES down to that of ESDRAS. But the principal and deciſive reaſon for ſeparating in ſuch manner the legal, doctrinal, and prophetical parts, from the hiſtorical, is the neceſſity of having ſome rule to go by: and, I proteſt, I know of none that is yet agreed upon. I content myſelf therefore to fix my opinion concerning the authority of the Old teſtament in this manner, and carry it thus far only. We muſt do ſo, or we muſt enter into that labyrinth of diſpute and contradiction, wherein even the moſt orthodox Jews and Chriſtians have wandered ſo many ages, and ſtill wander. It is ſtrange, but it is true; not only the Jews differ from the Chriſtians, but Jews and Chriſtians both differ among themſelves, concerning almoſt every point that is neceſſary to be certainly known and agreed upon, in order to eſtabliſh the authority of

books which both have received already as authentic and ſacred. So that whoever takes the pains to read what learned men have writ on this ſubject, will find that they leave the matter as doubtful as they took it up. Who were the authors of theſe ſcriptures, when they were published, how they were compoſed and preſerved, or renewed, to uſe a remarkable expreſſion of the famous HUET in his Demonſtration; in fine, how they were loſt during the captivity, and how they were retrieved after it, are all matters of controverſy to this day.

IT would be eaſy for me to deſcend into a greater detail, and to convince your lordship of what I have been ſaying in general by an induction of particulars, even without any other help than that of a few notes which I took when I applied myſelf to this examination, and which now lie before me. But ſuch a digreſſion would carry me too far: and I fear that you will think I have ſaid already more than enough upon this part of my ſubject. I go on therefore to obſerve to your lordship, that if the hiſtory of the Old teſtament was as exact and authentic, as the ignorance and impudence of ſome Rabbies have made them aſſert that it is: if we could believe with them that MOSES wrote every ſyllable in the Pentateuch as it now ſtands, or that all the pſalms were written by DAVID: nay, if we could believe, with PHILO and JOSEPHUS, that MOSES wrote the account of his own death and ſepulture, and made a ſort of a funeral panegyric on himſelf, as we find them in the laſt chapter of Deuteronomy; yet ſtill would I venture to aſſert, that he who expects to find a ſyſtem of

chronology, or a thread of hiſtory, or ſufficient materials for either, in the books of the Old teſtament, expects to find what the authors of theſe books, whoever they were, never intended. They are extracts of genealogies, not genealogies; extracts of hiſtories, not hiſtories. The Jews themſelves allow their genealogies to be very imperfect, and produce examples of omiſſions and errors in them, which denote ſufficiently that theſe genealogies are extracts, wherein every generation in the courſe of deſcent is not mentioned. I have read ſomewhere, perhaps in the works of St. JEROME, that this father juſtifies the opinion of thoſe who think it impoſſible to fix any certain chronology on that of the Bible: and this opinion will be juſtified ſtill better, to the underſtanding of every man that conſiders how grosly the Jews blunder whenever they meddle with chronology; for this plain reaſon, becauſe their ſcriptures are imperfect in this reſpect, and becauſe they rely on their oral, to rectify and ſupply their written, traditions: that is, they rely on traditions compiled long after the canon of their ſcriptures, but deemed by them of equal antiquity and authority. Thus, for inſtance, DANIEL and SIMON the juſt, according to them, were members at the ſame time of the great ſynagogue which began and finished the canon of the Old teſtament, under the preſidency of ESDRAS. This ESDRAS was the prophet MALACHI. DARIUS the ſon of HYSTASPES was ARTAXERXES LONGIMANUS; he was AHASUERUS, and he was the ſame DARIUS whom ALEXANDER conquered.

This

This may ſerve as a ſample of Jewiſh chronology, formed on their ſcriptures which afford inſufficient lights, and on their traditions which afford falſe lights. We are indeed more correct, and come nearer to the truth in theſe inſtances, perhaps in ſome others, becauſe we make uſe of profane chronology to help us. But profane chronology is itſelf ſo modern, ſo precarious, that this help does not reach to the greateſt part of that time to which ſacred chronology extends; that when it begins to help, it begins to perplex us too; and finally, that even with this help we ſhould not have had ſo much as the appearance of a complete chronological ſyſtem, and the ſame may be ſaid of univerſal hiſtory, if learned men had not proceeded very wiſely, on one uniform maxim, from the firſt ages of chriſtianity, when a cuſtom of ſanctifying profane learning, as well as prophane rites, which the Jews had imprudently laid aſide, was taken up by the Chriſtians. The maxim I mean is this, that prophane authority be admitted without ſcruple or doubt, whenever it ſays, or whenever it can be made to ſay, if not "totidem verbis," yet "totidem ſyllabis," or "totidem literis" at leaſt, or whenever it can be made by any interpretation to mean, what confirms, or ſupplies in a conſiſtent manner, the holy writ; and that the ſame authority be rejected, when nothing of this kind can be done, but the contradiction or inconſiſtency remains irreconcileable. Such a liberty as this would not be allowed in any other caſe; becauſe it ſuppoſes the very thing that is to be

proved. But we ſee it taken, very properly to be ſure, in favor of ſacred and infallible writings, when they are compared with others.

In order to perceive with the utmoſt evidence, that the ſcope and deſign of the author or authors of the Pentateuch, and of the other books of the Old teſtament, anſwer as little the purpoſe of antiquaries, in hiſtory, as in chronology, it will be ſufficient briefly to call to mind the ſum of what they relate, from the creation of the world to the eſtabliſhment of the Perſian empire. If the antediluvian world continued one thouſand ſix hundred and fifty-ſix years, and if the vocation of Abraham is to be placed four hundred and twenty-ſix years below the deluge, theſe twenty centuries make almoſt two thirds of the period mentioned: and the whole hiſtory of them is comprized in eleven ſhort chapters of Geneſis; which is certainly the moſt compendious extract that ever was made. If we examine the contents of theſe chapters, do we find any thing like an univerſal hiſtory, or ſo much as an abridgment of it? Adam and Eve were created, they broke the commandment of God, they were driven out of the garden of Eden, one of their ſons killed his brother, but their race ſoon multiplied and peopled the earth. What geography now have we, what hiſtory of this antediluvian world? Why, none. The ſons of God, it is ſaid, lay with the daughters of men, and begot giants, and God drowned all the inhabitants of the earth, except one family. After this we read that the earth was repeopled; but theſe children of one

family were divided into ſeveral languages, even whilſt they lived together, ſpoke the ſame language, and were employed in the ſame work. Out of one of the countries into which they diſperſed themſelves, Chaldea, God called ABRAHAM ſome time afterwards, with magnificent promiſes, and conducted him to a country called Chanaan. Did this author, my lord, intend an univerſal hiſtory? Certainly not. The tenth chapter of Geneſis names indeed ſome of the generations deſcending from the ſons of NOAH, ſome of the cities founded, and ſome of the countries planted by them. But what are bare names, naked of circumſtances, without deſcriptions of countries, or relations of events? They furniſh matter only for gueſs and diſpute; and even the ſimilitude of them, which is often uſed as a clue to lead us to the diſcovery of hiſtorical truth, has notoriously contributed to propagate error, and to encreaſe the perplexity of ancient tradition. Theſe imperfect and dark accounts have not furniſhed matter for gueſs and diſpute alone; but a much worſe uſe has been made of them by Jewiſh rabbies, Chriſtian fathers, and Mahometan doctors, in their prophane extenſions of this part of the Moſaic hiſtory. The creation of the firſt man is deſcribed by ſome, as if, Preadamites, they had aſſiſted at it. They talk of his beauty as if they had ſeen him, of his gigantic ſize as if they had meaſured him, and of his prodigious knowledge as if they had converſed with him. They point out the very ſpot where EVE laid her head the firſt time he enjoyed her.

They have minutes of the whole converſation between this mother of mankind, who damned her children before she bore them, and the ſerpent. Some are poſitive that CAIN quarrelled with ABEL about a point of doctrine, and others affirm that the diſpute aroſe about a girl. A great deal of ſuch ſtuff may be eaſily collected about ENOCH, about NOAH, and about the ſons of NOAH; but I wave any farther mention of ſuch impertinencies as BONZES or TALAPOINS would almoſt blush to relate. Upon the whole matter, if we may gueſs at the deſign of an author, by the contents of his book, the deſign of MOSES, or of the author of the hiſtory aſcribed to him, in this part of it, was to inform the people of Iſrael of their deſcent from NOAH by SEM, and of NOAH's from ADAM by SETH; to illuſtrate their original; to eſtablish their claim to the land of Chanaan, and to juſtify all the cruelties committed by JOSHUA in the conqueſt of the Chanaanites, in whom, ſays BOCHART, " the prophecy of NOAH was completed, „ when they were ſubdued by the Iſraelites, who „ had been ſo long ſlaves to the Egyptians. "

ALLOW me to make, as I go along, a ſhort reflection or two on this prophecy, and the completion of it, as they ſtand recorded in the Pentateuch, out of many that might be made. The terms of the prophecy then are not very clear: and the curſe pronounced in it contradicts all our notions of order and of juſtice. One is tempted to think, that the patriarch was ſtill drunk; and that no man in his ſenſes could hold

ſuch language, or paſs ſuch a ſentence. Certain it is, that no writer but a Jew could impute to the oeconomy of divine providence the accompliſhment of ſuch a prediction, nor make the Supreme Being the executor of ſuch a curſe.

HAM alone offended, CHANAAN was innocent; for the Hebrew and other doctors who would make the ſon an accomplice with his father, affirm not only without, but againſt, the expreſs authority of the text. CHANAAN was however alone curſed: and he became, according to his grandfather's prophecy, "a ſervant of ſervants," that is, the vileſt and worſt of ſlaves (for I take theſe words in a ſenſe, if not the moſt natural, the moſt favorable to the prophecy, and the leaſt abſurd) to SEM, though not to JAPHET, when the Iſraelites conquered Paleſtine; to one of his uncles, not to his brethren. Will it be ſaid — it has been ſaid — that where we read CHANAAN, we are to underſtand HAM, whoſe brethren SEM and JAPHET were. At this rate, we ſhall never know what we read: as theſe critics never care what they ſay. Will it be ſaid — this has been ſaid too — that HAM was puniſhed in his poſterity, when CHANAAN was curſed, and his deſcendants were exterminated. But who does not ſee that the curſe, and the puniſhment, in this caſe, fell on CHANAAN and his poſterity, excluſively of the reſt of the poſterity of HAM; and were therefore the curſe and puniſhment of the ſon, not of the father, properly? The deſcendants of MESRAIM, another of his ſons, were the Egyptians: and they

were ſo far from being ſervants of ſervants to their couſins the Semites, that theſe were ſervants of ſervants to them, during more than fourſcore years. Why the poſterity of CHANAAN was to be deemed an accurſed race, it is eaſy to account; and I have mentioned it juſt now. But it is not ſo eaſy to account, why the poſterity of the righteous SEM, that great example of filial reverence, became ſlaves to another branch of the family of HAM.

IT would not be worth while to lengthen this tedious letter, by ſetting down any more of the contents of the hiſtory of the bible. Your lordship may pleaſe to call the ſubſtance of it to your mind; and your native candor and love of truth will oblige you then to confeſs, that theſe ſacred books do not aim, in any part of them, at any thing like univerſal chronology and hiſtory. They contain a very imperfect account of the Iſraelites themſelves; of their ſettlement in the land of promiſe, of which, by the way, they never had entire, and ſcarce ever peaceable poſſeſſion; of their diviſions, apoſtaſies, repentances, relapſes, triumphs, and defeats under the occaſional government of their judges, and under that of their kings; of the Galilean and Samaritan captivities, into which they were carried by the kings of Aſſyria, and of that which was brought on the remnant of this people when the kingdom of Judah was deſtroyed by thoſe princes who governed the empire founded on the union of Niniveh and Babylon. Theſe things are all related, your lordship

knows, in a very ſummary and confuſed manner: and we learn ſo little of other nations by theſe accounts, that if we did not borrow ſome light from the traditions of other nations, we ſhould ſcarce underſtand them. One particular obſervation, and but one, I will make, to ſhew what knowledge in the hiſtory of mankind, and in the computation of time, may be expected from theſe books. The Aſſyrians were their neighbours, powerful neighbours, with whom they had much and long to do. Of this empire therefore, if of any thing, we might hope to find ſome ſatisfactory account. What do we find? The ſcripture takes no notice of any Aſſyrian kingdom, till juſt before the time when prophane hiſtory makes that empire to end. Then we hear of PHUL, of TEGLATH-PHALASSER, who was perhaps the ſame perſon, and of SALMANASSER, who took Samaria in the twelfth of the aera of NABONASSER, that is, twelve years after the Aſſyrian empire was no more. SENACHERIB ſucceeds to him, and ASSERHADDON to SENACHERIB. What ſhall we ſay to this apparent contrariety? If the ſilence of the bible creates a ſtrong preſumption againſt the firſt, may not the ſilence of prophane authority create ſome againſt the ſecond Aſſyrian Monarchs? The pains that are taken to perſuade, that there is room enough between SARDANAPALUS and CYRUS for the ſecond, will not reſolve the difficulty. Something much more plauſible may be ſaid, but even this will be hypothetical, and liable to great contradiction. So that upon the whole matter,

the ſcriptures are ſo far from giving us light into general hiſtory, that they encreaſe the obſcurity even of thoſe parts to which they have the neareſt relation. We have therefore neither in prophane nor in ſacred authors ſuch authentic, clear, diſtinct, and full accounts of the originals of ancient nations, and of the great events of thoſe ages that are commonly called the firſt ages, as deſerve to go by the name of hiſtory, or as afford ſufficient materials for chronology and hiſtory.

I MIGHT now proceed to obſerve to your lordship how this has happened, not only by the neceſſary conſequences of human nature, and the ordinary courſe of human affairs, but by the policy, artifice, corruption, and folly of mankind. But this would be to heap digreſſion upon digreſſion, and to preſume too much on your patience. I shall therefore content myſelf to apply theſe reflections on the ſtate of ancient hiſtory to the ſtudy of hiſtory, and to the method to be obſerved in it; as ſoon as your lordship has reſted yourſelf a little after reading, and I after writing ſo long a letter.

OF THE

STUDY of HISTORY.

LETTER IV.

I. That there is in hiſtory ſufficient authenticity to render it uſeful, notwithſtanding all objections to the contrary.

II. Of the method and due reſtrictions to be obſerved in the ſtudy of it.

WHETHER the letter I now begin to write will be long or short, I know not: but I find my memory is refreshed, my imagination warmed, and matter flows in ſo faſt upon me, that I have not time to preſs it cloſe. Since therefore you have provoked me to write, you muſt be content to take what follows.

I HAVE obſerved already that we are apt naturally to apply to ourſelves what has happened to other men, and that examples take their force from hence; as well thoſe which hiſtory, as thoſe which experience, offers to our reflection. What we do not believe to have happened therefore, we shall not thus apply: and for want of the ſame application, ſuch examples will not have the ſame effect. Ancient hiſtory, ſuch ancient hiſtory as I have deſcribed, is quite unfit therefore in this reſpect to anſwer the ends that every reaſonable man should propoſe to himſelf in this ſtudy; be-

cauſe ſuch ancient hiſtory will never gain ſufficient credit with any reaſonable man. A tale well told, or a comedy or a tragedy well wrought up, may have a momentary effect upon the mind, by heating the imagination, ſurprizing the judgment, and affecting ſtrongly the paſſions. The Athenians are ſaid to have been tranſported into a kind of martial phrenzy by the repreſentation of a tragedy of AESCHYLUS, and to have marched under this influence from the theatre to the plains of MARATHON. Theſe momentary impreſſions might be managed, for aught I know, in ſuch manner as to contribute a little, by frequent repetitions of them, towards maintaining a kind of habitual contempt of folly, deteſtation of vice, and admiration of virtue in well-policed common-wealths. But then theſe impreſſions cannot be made, nor this little effect be wrought, unleſs the fables bear an appearance of truth. When they bear this appearance, reaſon connives at the innocent fraud of imagination; reaſon diſpenſes, in favor of probability, with thoſe ſtrict rules of criticiſm that she has eſtabliſhed to try the truth of fact: but, after all, she receives theſe fables as fables; and as ſuch only she permits imagination to make the moſt of them. If they pretended to be hiſtory, they would be ſoon ſubjected to another and more ſevere examination. What may have happened, is the matter of an ingenious fable: what has happened, is that of an authentic hiſtory: the impreſſions which one or the other makes are in proportion. When imagination grows lawleſs and

wild, rambles out of the precincts of nature, and tells of heroes and giants, fairies and enchanters, of events and of phaenomena repugnant to univerſal experience, to our cleareſt and moſt diſtinct ideas, and to all the known laws of nature, reaſon does not connive a moment; but, far from receiving ſuch narrations as hiſtorical, she rejects them as unworthy to be placed even among the fabulous. Such narrations therefore cannot make the slighteſt momentary impreſſions on a mind fraught with knowledge, and void of ſuperſtition. Impoſed by authority, and aſſiſted by artifice, the deluſion hardly prevails over common ſenſe; blind ignorance almoſt ſees, and rash ſuperſtition heſitates: nothing leſs than enthuſiaſm and phrenzy can give credit to ſuch hiſtories, or apply ſuch examples. Don QUIXOTE believed; but even SANCHO doubted.

WHAT I have ſaid will not be much controverted by any man who has read AMADIS of Gaul, or has examined our ancient traditions without prepoſſeſſion. The truth is, the principal difference between them ſeems to be this. In AMADIS of Gaul, we have a thread of abſurdities that are invented without any regard to probability, and that lay no claim to belief: ancient traditions are an heap of fables, under which ſome particular truths, inſcrutable, and therefore uſeleſs to mankind, may lie concealed; which have a juſt pretence to nothing more, and yet impoſe themſelves upon us, and become, under the venerable name of ancient hiſtory, the foundations of modern fables,

the materials with which ſo many ſyſtems of fancy have been erected.

BUT now, as men are apt to carry their judgments into extremes, there are ſome that will be ready to inſiſt that all hiſtory is fabulous, and that the very beſt is nothing better than a probable tale, artfully contrived, and plauſibly told, wherein truth and falſhood are indiſtinguishably blended together. All the inſtances, and all the common-place arguments, that BAYLE and others have employed to eſtabliſh this ſort of Pyrrhoniſm, will be quoted: and from thence it will be concluded, that if the pretended hiſtories of the firſt ages, and of the originals of nations, be too improbable and too ill-vouched to procure any degree of belief, thoſe hiſtories that have been writ later, that carry a greater air of probability, and that boaſt even cotemporary authority, are at leaſt inſufficient to gain that degree of firm belief, which is neceſſary to render the ſtudy of them uſeful to mankind. But here that happens which often happens: the premiſes are true, and the concluſion is falſe; becauſe a general axiom is eſtabliſhed precariously on a certain number of partial obſervations. This matter is of conſequence; for it tends to aſcertain the degrees of aſſent that we may give to hiſtory.

I AGREE then that hiſtory has been purpoſely and ſyſtematically falſified in all ages, and that partiality and prejudice have occaſioned both voluntary and involuntary errors even in the beſt. Let me ſay without offence, my lord, ſince I

may ſay it with truth and am able to prove it, that eccleſiaſtical authority has led the way to this corruption in all ages, and all religions. How monſtrous were the abſurdities that the prieſthood impoſed on the ignorance and ſuperſtition of mankind in the Pagan world, concerning the originals of religions and governments, their inſtitutions and rites, their laws and cuſtoms? What opportunities had they for ſuch impoſitions, whilſt the keeping the records and collecting the traditions was in ſo many nations the peculiar office of this order of men? A cuſtom highly extolled by JOSEPHUS, but plainly liable to the groſſeſt frauds, and even a temptation to them. If the foundations of Judaiſm and Chriſtianity have been laid in truth, yet what numberleſs fables have been invented to raiſe, to embellish, and to ſupport theſe ſtructures, according to the intereſt and taſte of the ſeveral architects? That the Jews have been guilty of this will be allowed: and, to the ſhame of Chriſtians, if not of Chriſtianity, the fathers of one church have no right to throw the firſt ſtone at the fathers of the other. Deliberate ſyſtematical lying has been practiſed and encouraged from age to age; and among all the pious frauds that have been employed to maintain a reverence and zeal for their religion in the minds of men, this abuſe of hiſtory has been one of the principal and moſt ſucceſsful: an evident and experimental proof, by the way, of what I have inſiſted upon ſo much, the aptitude and natural tendency of hiſtory to form our opinions, and to ſettle our habits. This righteous

expedient was in ſo much uſe and repute in the Greek church, that one METAPHRASTUS wrote a treatiſe on the art of compoſing holy romances: the fact, if I remember right, is cited by BAILLET in his book of the lives of the ſaints. He and other learned men of the Roman church have thought it of ſervice to their cauſe, ſince the reſurrection of letters; to detect ſome impoſtures, and to depoſe, or to unniche, according to the French expreſſion, now and then a reputed ſaint; but they ſeem in doing this to mean no more than a ſort of compoſition: they give up ſome fables that they may defend others with greater advantage, and they make truth ſerve as a ſtalking-horſe to error. The ſame ſpirit, that prevailed in the Eaſtern church, prevailed in the Weſtern, and prevails ſtill. A ſtrong proof of it appeared lately in the country where I am. A ſudden fury of devotion ſeized the people of Paris for a little prieſt *, undiſtinguiſhed during his life, and dubbed a ſaint by the Janſeniſts after his death. Had the firſt miniſter been a Janſeniſt, the ſaint had been a ſaint ſtill. All France had kept his feſtival: and, ſince there are thouſands of eye-witneſſes ready to atteſt the truth of all the miracles ſuppoſed to have been wrought at his tomb, notwithſtanding the diſcouragement which theſe zealots have met with from the government; we may aſſure ourſelves, that theſe ſilly impoſtures would have been tranſmitted in all the ſolemn

* The abbé Pâris.

pomp of hiſtory, from the knaves of this age to the fools of the next.

THIS lying ſpirit has gone forth from eccleſiaſtical to other hiſtorians: and I might fill many pages with inſtances of extravagant fables that have been invented in ſeveral nations, to celebrate their antiquity, to ennoble their originals, and to make them appear illuſtrious in the arts of peace and the triumphs of war. When the brain is well heated, and devotion or vanity, the ſemblance of virtue or real vice, and, above all, diſputes and conteſts, have inſpired that complication of paſſions we term zeal, the effects are much the ſame, and hiſtory becomes very often a lying panegyric or a lying ſatire; for different nations, or different parties in the ſame nation, belie one another without any reſpect for truth, as they murder one another without any regard to right or ſenſe of humanity. Religious zeal may boaſt this horrid advantage over civil zeal, that the effects of it have been more ſanguinary, and the malice more unrelenting. In another reſpect they are more alike, and keep a nearer proportion: different religions have not been quite ſo barbarous to one another as ſects of the ſame religion; and, in like manner, nation has had better quarter from nation, than party from party. But, in all theſe controverſies, men have puſhed their rage beyond their own and their adverſaries lives: they have endeavoured to intereſt poſterity in their quarrels, and by rendering hiſtory ſubſervient to this wicked purpoſe, they have done their utmoſt to

perpetuate ſcandal, and to immortaliſe their animoſity. The Heathen taxed the Jews even with idolatry; the Jews joined with the Heathen to render Chriſtianity odious: but the church, who beat them at their own weapons during theſe conteſts, has had this further triumph over them, as well as over the ſeveral ſects that have ariſen within her own pale: the works of thoſe who have writ againſt her have been deſtroyed; and whatever she advanced, to juſtify herſelf and to defame her adverſaries, is preſerved in her annals, and the writings of her doctors.

THE charge of corrupting hiſtory, in the cauſe of religion, has been always committed to the moſt famous champions, and greateſt ſaints of each church; and, if I was not more afraid of tiring, than of ſcandaliſing your lordship, I could quote to you examples of modern churchmen who have endeavoured to juſtify foul language by the New teſtament; and cruelty by the Old: nay, what is execrable beyond imagination, and what ſtrikes horror into every mind that entertains due ſentiments of the Supreme Being, GOD himſelf has been cited for rallying and inſulting ADAM after his fall. In other caſes, this charge belongs to the pedants of every nation, and the tools of every party. What accuſations of idolatry and ſuperſtition have not been brought, and aggravated againſt the Mahometans? Thoſe wretched Chriſtians who returned from thoſe wars, ſo improperly called the holy wars, rumoured theſe ſtories about the Weſt: and you may find, in

ſome

ſome of the old chroniclers and romance-writers, as well as poets, the Saracens called Paynims; though ſurely they were much further off from any ſuſpicion of Polytheiſm, than thoſe who called them by that name. When MAHOMET the ſecond took Conſtantinople in the fifteenth century, the Mahometans began to be a little better, and but a little better known, than they had been before, to theſe parts of the world. But their religion, as well as their cuſtoms and manners, was ſtrangely miſrepreſented by the Greek refugees that fled from the Turks: and the terror and hatred which this people had inſpired by the rapidity of their conqueſts, and by their ferocity, made all theſe miſrepreſentations univerſally paſs for truths. Many ſuch inſtances may be collected from MARACCIO's refutation of the koran, and RELANDUS has publiſhed a very valuable treatiſe on purpoſe to refute theſe calumnies, and to juſtify the Mahometans. Does not this example incline your lordſhip to think, that the Heathens, and the Arians, and other heretics, would not appear quite ſo abſurd in their opinions, nor ſo abominable in their practice, as the orthodox Chriſtians have repreſented them; if ſome RELANDUS could ariſe, with the materials neceſſary to their juſtification in his hands? He who reflects on the circumſtances that attended letters, from the time when CONSTANTINE, inſtead of uniting the characters of emperor and ſovereign pontiff in himſelf when he became Chriſtian, as they were united in him and all the other emperors in the Pagan ſyſtem of government, gave

ſo much independent wealth and power to the clergy, and the means of acquiring ſo much more: he who carries theſe reflections on through all the latter empire, and through thoſe ages of ignorance and ſuperſtition, wherein it was hard to ſay which was greateſt, the tyranny of the clergy, or the ſervility of the laity: he who conſiders the extreme ſeverity, for inſtance, of the laws made by THEODOSIUS in order to ſtifle every writing that the orthodox clergy, that is, the clergy then in fashion, disliked; or the character and influence of ſuch a prieſt as GREGORY called the great, who proclaimed war to all heathen learning in order to promote Chriſtian verity; and flattered BRUNEHAULT, and abetted PHOCAS: he who conſiders all theſe things, I ſay, will not be at a loſs to find the reaſons, why hiſtory, both that which was writ before, and a great part of that which has been writ ſince the Chriſtian aera, is come to us ſo imperfect and ſo corrupt.

WHEN the imperfection is due to a total want of memorials, either becauſe none were originally written, or becauſe they have been loſt by devaſtations of countries, extirpations of people, and other accidents in a long courſe of time; or becauſe zeal, malice, and policy have joined their endeavours to deſtroy them purpoſely; we muſt be content to remain in our ignorance, and there is no great harm in that. Secure from being deceived, I can ſubmit to be uninformed. But when there is not a total want of memorials, when ſome have been loſt or deſtroyed, and others have been

preſerved and propagated; then we are in danger of being deceived: and therefore he muſt be very implicit indeed who receives for true the hiſtory of any religion or nation, and much more that of any ſect or party; without having the means of confronting it with ſome other hiſtory. A reaſonable man will not be thus implicit. He will not eſtabliſh the truth of hiſtory on ſingle, but on concurrent teſtimony. If there be none ſuch, he will doubt abſolutely: if there be a little ſuch, he will proportion his aſſent or diſſent accordingly. A ſmall gleam of light, borrowed from foreign anecdotes, ſerves often to diſcover a whole ſyſtem of falſhood: and even they who corrupt hiſtory frequently betray themſelves by their ignorance or inadvertency. Examples whereof I could eaſily produce. Upon the whole matter, in all theſe caſes we cannot be deceived eſſentially, unleſs we pleaſe: and therefore there is no reaſon to eſtabliſh Pyrrhoniſm, that we may avoid the ridicule of credulity.

IN all other caſes, there is leſs reaſon ſtill to do ſo; for when hiſtories and hiſtorical memorials abound, even thoſe that are falſe ſerve to the diſcovery of the truth. Inſpired by different paſſions, and contrived for oppoſite purpoſes, they contradict; and, contradicting, they convict one another. Criticiſm ſeparates the ore from the droſs, and extracts from various authors a ſeries of true hiſtory, which could not have been found entire in any one of them, and will command our aſſent, when it is formed with judgment, and repreſented with candor. If this may be done, as it has been done ſometimes,

with the help of authors who writ on purpoſe to deceive; how much more eaſily, and more effectually may it be done, with the help of thoſe who paid a greater regard to truth? In a multitude of writers there will be always ſome, either incapable of groſs prevarication from the fear of being diſcovered, and of acquiring infamy whilſt they ſeek for fame; or elſe attached to truth upon a nobler and ſurer principle. It is certain that theſe, even the laſt of them, are fallible. Bribed by ſome paſſion or other, the former may venture now and then to propagate a falſhood, or to diſguiſe a truth; like the painter that drew in profile, as LUCIAN ſays, the picture of a prince that had but one eye. MONTAGNE objects to the memorials of DU BELLAY, that though the groſs of the facts be truly related, yet theſe authors turned every thing they mentioned to the advantage of their maſter, and mentioned nothing which could not be ſo turned. The old fellow's words are worth quoting. — "De contourner le jugement des evene„ mens ſouvent contre raiſon à notre avantage, „ et d'obmettre tout ce qu'il y a de chatouilleux „ en la vie de leur maiſtre, ils en font meſtier." Theſe, and ſuch as theſe, deviate occaſionally and voluntarily from truth; but even they who are attached to it the moſt religiously may slide ſometimes into involuntary error. In matters of hiſtory we prefer very juſtly cotemporary authority; and yet cotemporary authors are the moſt liable to be warped from the ſtraight rule of truth, in writing on ſubjects which have affected them ſtrongly,

"et quorum pars magna fuerunt." I am ſo perſuaded of this from what I have felt in myſelf, and obſerved in others, that if life and health enough fall to my ſhare, and I am able to finish what I meditate, a kind of hiſtory, from the late queen's acceſſion to the throne, to the peace of Utrecht, there will be no materials that I ſhall examine more ſcrupulously and ſeverely, than thoſe of the time when the events to be ſpoken of were in tranſaction. But though the writers of theſe two ſorts, both of whom pay as much regard to truth as the various infirmities of our nature admit, are fallible; yet this fallibility will not be ſufficient to give colour to Pyrrhoniſm. Where their ſincerity as to fact is doubtful, we ſtrike out truth by the confrontation of different accounts: as we ſtrike out ſparks of fire by the colliſion of flints and ſteel. Where their judgments are ſuſpicious of partiality, we may judge for ourſelves; or adopt their judgments, after weighing them with certain grains of allowance. A little natural ſagacity will proportion theſe grains according to the particular circumſtances of the authors, or their general characters; for even theſe influence. Thus MONTAGNE pretends, but he exaggerates a little that GUICCIARDIN no where aſcribes any one action to a virtuous, but every one to a vicious principle. Something like this has been reproached to TACITUS; and, notwithſtanding all the ſprightly looſe obſervations of MONTAGNE in one of his eſſays, where he labours to prove the contrary, read PLUTARCH's compariſons in what language you

pleaſe, I am of BODIN's mind, you will perceive that they were made by a Greek. In ſhort, my lord, the favorable opportunities of corrupting hiſtory have been often interrupted, and are now over in ſo many countries, that truth penetrates even into thoſe where lying continues ſtill to be part of the policy eccleſiaſtical and civil; or where, to ſay the beſt we can ſay, truth is never ſuffered to appear, till ſhe has paſſed through hands, out of which ſhe ſeldom returns entire and undefiled.

BUT it is time I ſhould conclude this head, under which I have touched ſome of thoſe reaſons that ſhew the folly of endeavouring to eſtabliſh univerſal Pyrrhoniſm in matters of hiſtory, becauſe there are few hiſtories without ſome lies, and none without ſome miſtakes; and that prove the body of hiſtory which we poſſeſs, ſince ancient memorials have been ſo critically examined, and modern memorials have been ſo multiplied, to contain in it ſuch a probable ſeries of events, eaſily diſtinguishable from the improbable, as force the aſſent of every man who is in his ſenſes, and are therefore ſufficient to anſwer all the purpoſes of the ſtudy of hiſtory. I might have appealed perhaps, without entering into the argument at all, to any man of candor whether his doubts concerning the truth of hiſtory have hindered him from applying the examples he has met with in it, and from judging of the preſent, and ſometimes of the future, by the paſt? whether he has not been touched with reverence and admiration, at the virtue and wiſdom of ſome men, and of ſome

ages; and whether he has not felt indignation and contempt for others? whether EPAMINONDAS, or PHOCION, for inſtance, the DECII, or the SCIPIOS, have not raiſed in his mind a flame of public ſpirit, and private virtue? and whether he has not ſhuddered with horror at the proſcriptions of MARIUS and SYLLA, at the treachery of THEODOTUS and ACHILLAS, and at the conſummate cruelty of an infant king? "Quis non contra Marii „ arma, et contra Syllae proſcriptionem concitatur? „ Quis non THEODOTO, et ACHILLAE, et ipſi „ puero, non puerile auſo facinus, infeſtus eſt?" If all this be a digreſſion therefore, your lordſhip will be ſo good as to excuſe it.

II. WHAT has been ſaid concerning the multiplicity of hiſtories, and of hiſtorical memorials wherewith our libraries abound ſince the reſurrection of letters happened, and the art of printing began, puts me in mind of another general rule, that ought to be obſerved by every man who intends to make a real improvement, and to become wiſer as well as better, by the ſtudy of hiſtory. I hinted at this rule in a former letter, where I ſaid that we ſhould neither grope in the dark, nor wander in the light. Hiſtory muſt have a certain degree of probability, and authenticity, or the examples we find in it will not carry a force ſufficient to make due impreſſions on our minds, nor to illuſtrate nor to ſtrenghten the precepts of philoſophy and the rules of good policy. But beſides, when hiſtories have this neceſſary authenticity and probability, there is

much diſcernment to be employed in the choice and the uſe we make of them. Some are to be read, ſome are to be ſtudied; and ſome may be neglected entirely, not only without detriment, but with advantage. Some are the proper objects of one man's curioſity, ſome of another's, and ſome of all men's, but all hiſtory is not an object of curioſity for any man. He who improperly, wantonly, and abſurdly makes it ſo, indulges a ſort of canine appetite: the curioſity of one, like the hunger of the other, devours ravenously and without diſtinction whatever falls in it's way, but neither of them digeſts. They heap crudity upon crudity, and nourish and improve nothing but their diſtemper. Some ſuch characters I have known, though it is not the moſt common extreme into which men are apt to fall. One of them I knew in this country. He joined, to a more than athletic ſtrength of body, a prodigious memory; and to both a prodigious induſtry. He had read almoſt conſtantly twelve or fourteen hours a day, for five and twenty or thirty years; and had heaped together as much learning as could be crowded into an head. In the courſe of my acquaintance with him, I conſulted him once or twice, not oftener; for I found this maſs of learning of as little uſe to me as to the owner. The man was communicative enough; but nothing was diſtinct in his mind. How could it be otherwiſe? he had never ſpared time to think, all was employed in reading. His reaſon had not the merit of common mechaniſm. When you preſs a watch

or pull a clock, they anſwer your queſtion with preciſion; for they repeat exactly the hour of the day, and tell you neither more nor leſs than you deſire to know. But when you asked this man a queſtion, he overwhelmed you by pouring forth all that the ſeveral terms or words of your queſtion recalled to his memory: and if he omitted any thing, it was that very thing to which the ſenſe of the whole queſtion should have led him and confined him. To ask him a queſtion, was to wind up a ſpring in his memory, that rattled on with vaſt rapidity, and confuſed noiſe, till the force of it was ſpent: and you went away with all the noiſe in your ears, ſtunned and un-informed. I never left him that I was not ready to ſay to him, "Dieu vous faſſe la grace de devenir moins ſa-„ vant!" a wish that LA MOTHE LE VAYER mentions upon ſome occaſion or other, and that he would have done well to have applied to himſelf upon many.

HE who reads with diſcernment and choice, will acquire leſs learning, but more knowledge: and as this knowledge is collected with deſign, and cultivated with art and method, it will be at all times of immediate and ready uſe to himſelf and others,

Thus uſeful arms in magazines we place,
All rang'd in order; and diſpos'd with grace:
Nor thus alone the curious eye to pleaſe;
But to be found, when need requires, with eaſe:

You remember the verſes, my lord, in our friend's Eſſay on criticiſm, which was the work of his childhood almoſt; but is ſuch a monument of good ſenſe and poetry as no other, that I know, has raiſed in his riper years.

He who reads without this diſcernment and choice, and, like Bodin's pupil, reſolves to read all, will not have time, no, nor capacity neither, to do any thing elſe. He will not be able to think, without which it is impertinent to read; nor to act, without which it is impertinent to think. He will aſſemble materials with much pains, and purchaſe them at much expence, and have neither leiſure nor skill to frame them into proper ſcantlings, or to prepare them for uſe. To what purpoſe should he husband his time, or learn architecture? he has no deſign to build. But then to what purpoſe all theſe quarries of ſtone, all theſe mountains of ſand and lime, all theſe foreſts of oak and deal? "Magno impendio temporum, magna „ alienarum aurium moleſtia, laudatio haec conſtat, „ O hominem literatum! Simus hoc titulo ruſticiore „ contenti, O virum bonum!" We may add, „ and Seneca might have added in his own ſtyle, and according to the manners and characters of his own age, another title as ruſtic, and as little in fashion, "O virum ſapientia ſua ſimplicem, et „ ſimplicitate ſua ſapientem! O virum utilem ſibi, „ ſuis, reipublicae, et humano generi!" I have ſaid perhaps already, but no matter, it cannot be repeated too often, that the drift of all philoſophy, and of all political ſpeculations, ought to be

the making us better men, and better citizens. Thoſe ſtudies, which have no intention towards improving our moral characters, have no pretence to be ſtyled philoſophical. "Quis eſt enim," ſays TULLY in his Offices, "qui nullis officii praeceptis tradendis, philoſophum ſe audeat dicere?" Whatever political ſpeculations, inſtead of preparing us to be uſeful to ſociety and to promote the happineſs of mankind, are only ſyſtems for gratifying private ambition, and promoting private intereſts at the public expence; all ſuch, I ſay, deſerve to be burnt, and the authors of them to ſtarve, like MACHIAVEL, in a jail.

LETTER V.

I. The great uſe of hiſtory, properly ſo called, as diſtinguiſhed from the writings of mere annaliſts and antiquaries.

II. Greek and Roman hiſtorians.

III. Some idea of a complete hiſtory.

IV. Further cautions to be obſerved in this ſtudy, and the regulation of it according to the different profeſſions, and ſituations of men: above all, the uſe to be made of it (1) by divines, and (2) by thoſe who are called to the ſervice of their country.

I REMEMBER my laſt letter ended abruptly, and a long interval has ſince paſſed: ſo that the thread I had then ſpun has ſlipt from me. I will try to recover it, and to purſue the task your lordſhip has obliged me to continue. Beſides the pleaſure of obeying your orders, it is likewiſe of ſome advantage to myſelf, to recollect my thoughts, and reſume a ſtudy in which I was converſant formerly. For nothing can be more true than that ſaying of SOLON reported by PLATO, though cenſured by him, impertinently enough in one of his wild books of laws — "Aſſidue addiſcens, ad ſenium „ venio." The truth is, the moſt knowing man

in the courſe of the longeſt life, will have always much to learn, and the wiſeſt and beſt much to improve. This rule will hold in the knowledge and improvement to be acquired by the ſtudy of hiſtory: and therefore even he who has gone to this ſchool in his youth, ſhould not neglect it in his age. "I read in LIVY," ſays MONTAGNE, "what another man does not, and PLUTARCH „read there what I do not." Juſt ſo the ſame man may read at fifty what he did not read in the ſame book at five-and-twenty: at leaſt I have found it ſo, by my own experience, on many occaſions.

BY comparing, in this ſtudy, the experience of other men and other ages with our own, we improve both: we analyſe, as it were, philoſophy. We reduce all the abſtract ſpeculations of ethics, and all the general rules of human policy, to their firſt principles. With theſe advantages every man may, though few men do, advance daily towards thoſe ideas, thoſe increated eſſences a Platoniſt would ſay, which no human creature can reach in practice, but in the neareſt approaches to which the perfection of our nature conſiſts; becauſe every approach of this kind renders a man better, and wiſer for himſelf, for his family, for the little community of his own country, and for the great community of the world. Be not ſurpriſed, my lord, at the order in which I place theſe objects. Whatever order divines and moraliſts, who contemplate the duties belonging to theſe objects, may place them in, this is the order they hold in nature: and I have always thought that we might

lead ourſelves and others to private virtue, more effectually by a due obſervation of this order, than by any of thoſe ſublime refinements that pervert it.

> Self-Love but ſerves the virtuous mind to wake;
> As the ſmall pebble ſtirs the peaceful lake.
> The centre mov'd, a circle ſtrait ſucceeds;
> Another ſtill, and ſtill another ſpreads:
> Friend, parent, neighbour, firſt it will embrace,
> His country next, and next all human race.

So ſings our friend POPE, my lord, and ſo I believe. So I ſhall prove too, if I miſtake not, in an epiſtle I am about to write to him, in order to complete a ſet that were writ ſome years ago.

A MAN of my age, who returns to the ſtudy of hiſtory, has no time to loſe, becauſe he has little to live: a man of your lordship's age has no time to loſe, becauſe he has much to do. For different reaſons therefore the ſame rules will ſuit us. Neither of us muſt grope in the dark, neither of us muſt wander in the light. I have done the firſt formerly a good deal; " ne verba mihi daren-„ tur; ne aliquid eſſe, in hac recondita antiquitatis „ ſcientia, magni ac ſecreti boni judicaremus. " If you take my word, you will throw none of your time away in the ſame manner: and I ſhall have the leſs regret for that which I have miſpent, if I perſuade you to haſten down from the broken traditions of antiquity, to the more entire as well as more authentic hiſtories of ages more modern. In the ſtudy of theſe we ſhall find many a

complete ſeries of events, preceded by a deduction of their immediate and remote cauſes, related in their full extent, and accompanied with ſuch a detail of circumſtances, and characters, as may tranſport the attentive reader back to the very time, make him a party to the councils, and an actor in the whole ſcene of affairs. Such draughts as theſe, either found in hiſtory or extracted by our own application from it, and ſuch alone, are truly uſeful. Thus hiſtory becomes what she ought to be, and what she has been ſometimes called, " magiſtra vitae," the miſtreſs, like philoſophy of human life. If she is not this, she is at beſt " nuntia vetuſtatis," the gazette of antiquity, or a dry regiſter of uſeleſs anecdotes. SUETONIUS ſays that TIBERIUS uſed to enquire of the grammarians, " quae mater Hecubae? quod Achillis „ nomen inter virgines fuiſſet? quid Syrenes „ cantare ſint ſolitae?" SENECA mentions certain Greek authors, who examined very accurately, whether ANACREON loved wine or women beſt, whether SAPPHO was a common whore, with other points of equal importance: and I make no doubt but that a man, better acquainted than I have the honor to be with the learned perſons of our own country, might find ſome who have diſcovered ſeveral anecdotes concerning the giant ALBION, concerning SAMOTHES the ſon of BRITO the grand-ſon of JAPHET, and concerning BRUTUS who led a colony into our island after the ſiege of Troy, as the others re-peopled it after the deluge. But ten millions of ſuch anecdotes as theſe, though

they were true; and complete authentic volumes of Egyptian or Chaldean, of Greek or Latin, of Gallic or British, of French or Saxon records, would be of no value in my ſenſe, becauſe of no uſe towards our improvement in wiſdom and virtue; if they contained nothing more than dynaſties and genealogies, and a bare mention of remarkable events in the order of time, like journals, chronological tables; or dry and meagre annals.

I SAY the ſame of all thoſe modern compoſitions in which we find rather the heads of hiſtory, than any thing that deſerves to be called hiſtory. Their authors are either abridgers or compilers. The firſt do neither honor to themſelves nor good to mankind: for ſurely the abridger is in a form below the translator: and the book, at leaſt the hiſtory, that wants to be abridged, does not deſerve to be read. They have done anciently a great deal of hurt by ſubſtituting many a bad book in the place of a good one; and by giving occaſion to men, who contented themſelves with extracts and abridgments, to neglect and, through their neglect, to loſe the invaluable originals: for which reaſon I curſe CONSTANTINE PORPHYROGENETES as heartily as I do GREGORY. The ſecond are of ſome uſe, as far as they contribute to preſerve public acts, and dates, and the memory of great events. But they who are thus employed have ſeldom the means of knowing thoſe private paſſages on which all public tranſactions depend, and as ſeldom the skill and the talents neceſſary to

put

put what they do know well together: they cannot ſee the working of the mine, but their induſtry collects the matter that is thrown out. It is the buſineſs, or it ſhould be ſo, of others to ſeparate the pure ore from the droſs, to ſtamp it into coin, and to enrich not encumber mankind. When there are none ſufficient to this task, there may be antiquaries, and there may be journaliſts or annaliſts, but there are no hiſtorians.

IT is worth while to obſerve the progreſs that the Romans and the Greeks made towards hiſtory. The Romans had journaliſts or annaliſts from the very beginning of their ſtate. In the ſixth century, or very near it at ſooneſt, they began to have antiquaries, and ſome attempts were made towards writing of hiſtory. I call theſe firſt hiſtorical productions attempts only or eſſays: and they were no more, neither among the Romans nor among the Greeks. "Graeci ipſi ſic initio ſcripti-„ tarunt ut noſter CATO, ut PICTOR, ut PISO." It is ANTONY, not the triumvir, my lord, but his grandfather the famous orator, who ſays this in the ſecond book of TULLY De oratore: he adds afterwards, "Itaque qualis apud Graecos „ PHERECYDES, HELLANICUS, ACUSILAUS, alii-„ que permulti, talis noſter CATO, et PICTOR, „ et PISO." I know that ANTONY ſpeaks here ſtrictly of defect of ſtyle and want of oratory. They were "tantummodo narratores, non exor-„ natores," as he expreſſes himſelf: but as they wanted ſtyle and skill to write in ſuch a manner as might anſwer all the ends of hiſtory, ſo they

wanted materials. PHERECYDES writ ſomething about IPHIGENIA, and the feſtivals of BACCHUS. HELLANICUS was a poetical hiſtorian, and ACUSILAUS graved genealogies on plates of braſs. PICTOR, who is called by LIVY "ſcriptorum „ antiquiſſimus," published, I think, ſome ſhort annals of his own time. Neither he nor PISO could have ſufficient materials for the hiſtory of Rome; nor CATO, I preſume, even for the antiquities of Italy. The Romans, with the other people of that country, were then juſt riſing out of barbarity, and growing acquainted with letters; for thoſe that the Grecian colonies might bring into Sicily, and the ſouthern parts of Italy, ſpread little, or laſted little, and made in the whole no figure. And whatever learning might have flouriſhed among the ancient Etrurians, which was perhaps at moſt nothing better than augury, and divination, and ſuperſtitious rites, which were admired and cultivated in ignorant ages, even that was almoſt entirely worn out of memory. Pedants, who would impoſe all the traditions of the four firſt ages of Rome, for authentic hiſtory, have inſiſted much on certain annals, of which mention is made in the very place I have juſt now quoted. "Ab initio rerum Romanarum," ſays the ſame interlocutor, "uſque ad P. MUCIUM pontificem „ maximum, res omnes ſingulorum annorum „ mandabat literis pontifex maximus, efferebatque „ in album, et proponebat tabulam domi, poteſtas „ ut eſſet populo cognoſcendi; iidemque etiam „ nunc annales maximi nominantur." But, my

lord, be pleaſed to take notice, that the very diſtinction I make is made here between a bare annaliſt and an hiſtorian: "erat hiſtoria nihil „ aliud," in theſe early days, "niſi annalium „ confectio." Take notice likewiſe, by the way, that LIVY, whoſe particular application it had been to ſearch into this matter, affirms poſitively that the greateſt part of all public and private monuments, among which he ſpecifies theſe very annals, had been deſtroyed in the ſack of Rome by the Gauls: and PLUTARCH cites CLODIUS for the ſame aſſertion, in the life of NUMA POMPILIUS. Take notice, in the laſt place, of that which is more immediately to our preſent purpoſe. Theſe annals could contain nothing more than ſhort minutes or memorandums hung up in a table at the pontiff's houſe, like the rules of the game in a billiard-room, and much ſuch hiſtory as we have in the epitomes prefixed to the books of LIVY or of any other hiſtorian, in lapidary inſcriptions, or in ſome modern almanacks. Materials for hiſtory they were no doubt, but ſcanty and inſufficient; ſuch as thoſe ages could produce when writing and reading were accompliſhments ſo uncommon, that the praetor was directed by law, clavum pangere, to drive a nail into the door of a temple, that the number of years might be reckoned by the number of nails. Such in ſhort as we have in monkiſh annaliſts, and other ancient chroniclers of nations now in being: but not ſuch as can entitle the authors of them to be called hiſtorians, nor can enable others to write

hiſtory in that fulneſs in which it muſt be written to become a leſſon of ethics and politics. The truth is, nations, like men, have their infancy: and the few paſſages of that time, which they retain, are not ſuch as deſerved moſt to be remembered; but ſuch as, being moſt proportioned to that age, made the ſtrongeſt impreſſions on their minds. In thoſe nations that preſerve their dominion long and grow up to manhood, the elegant as well as the neceſſary arts and ſciences are improved to ſome degree of perfection: and hiſtory, that was at firſt intended only to record the names, or perhaps the general characters of ſome famous men, and to tranſmit in groſs the remarkable events of every age to poſterity, is raiſed to anſwer another, and a nobler end.

II. THUS it happened among the Greeks, but much more among the Romans, notwithſtanding the prejudices in favor of the former even among the latter. I have ſometimes thought that VIRGIL might have juſtly aſcribed to his countrymen the praiſe of writing hiſtory better, as well as that of affording the nobleſt ſubjects for it, in thoſe famous verſes, * where the different excellencies of the two nations are ſo finely touched: but he would have weakened perhaps by lengthening, and have flattened the climax. Open HERODOTUS,

* Excudent alli ſpirantia mollius aera,
Credo equidem: vivos ducent de marmore vultus;
Orabunt cauſas melius: coeliqne meatus
Deſcribent radio, et ſurgentia ſidera dicent:
Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento:
Hae tibi erunt artes; paciſque imponere morem,
Parcere ſubjectis, et debellare ſuperbos.

you are entertained by an agreeable ſtory-teller, who meant to entertain, and nothing more. Read THUCYDIDES or XENOPHON, you are taught indeed as well as entertained: and the ſtateſman or the general, the philoſopher or the orator, ſpeaks to you in every page. They wrote on ſubjects on which they were well informed, and they treated them fully: they maintained the dignity of hiſtory, and thought it beneath them to vamp up old traditions, like the writers of their age and country, and to be the trumpeters of a lying antiquity. The Cyropaedia of XENOPHON may be objected perhaps; but if he gave it for a romance, not an hiſtory, as he might for aught we can tell, it is out of the caſe: and if he gave it for an hiſtory, not a romance, I ſhould prefer his authority to that of HERODOTUS or any other of his countrymen. But however this might be, and whatever merit we may juſtly aſcribe to theſe two writers, who were almoſt ſingle in their kind, and who treated but ſmall portions of hiſtory; certain it is in general, that the levity as well as loquacity of the Greeks made them incapable of keeping up to the true ſtandard of hiſtory: and even POLYBIUS and DIONYSIUS of Halicarnaſſus muſt bow to the great Roman authors. Many principal men of that commonwealth wrote memorials of their own actions and their own times: SYLLA, CAESAR, LABIENUS, POLLIO, AUGUSTUS, and others. What writers of memorials, what compilers of the materia hiſtorica were theſe? What genius was neceſſary

to finish up the pictures that ſuch maſters had sketched? Rome afforded men that were equal to the task. Let the remains, the precious remains of SALLUST, of LIVY, and of TACITUS, witneſs this truth. When TACITUS wrote, even the appearances of virtue had been long proſcribed, and taſte was grown corrupt as well as manners. Yet hiſtory preſerved her integrity, and her luſtre. She preſerved them in the writings of ſome whom TACITUS mentions, in none perhaps more than his own; every line of which out-weighs whole pages of ſuch a rhetor as FAMIANUS STRADA. I ſingle him out among the moderns, becauſe he had the foolish preſumption to cenſure TACITUS, and to write hiſtory himſelf: and your lordship will forgive this short excurſion in honor of a favorite author.

WHAT a ſchool of private and public virtue had been opened to us at the reſurrection of learning, if the latter hiſtorians of the Roman commonwealth, and the firſt of the ſucceeding monarchy, had come down to us entire? The few that are come down, though broken and imperfect, compoſe the beſt body of hiſtory that we have, nay the only body of ancient hiſtory that deſerves to be an object of ſtudy. It fails us indeed moſt at that remarkable and fatal period, where our reaſonable curioſity is raiſed the higheſt. LIVY employed five-and-forty books to bring his hiſtory down to the end of the ſixth century, and the breaking out of the third Punic war: but he employed ninety-five to bring it down from thence to the death of DRUSUS; that is, through the courſe of

one hundred and twenty or thirty years. APIAN, DION CASSIUS and others, nay even PLUTARCH included, make us but poor amends for what is loſt of LIVY. Among all the adventitious helps by which we endeavour to ſupply this loſs in ſome degree, the beſt are thoſe that we find ſcattered up and down in the works of TULLY. His Orations particularly, and his Letters, contain many curious anecdotes and inſtructive reflections, concerning the intrigues and machinations that were carried on againſt liberty, from CATILINE's conſpiracy to CAESAR's. The ſtate of the government, the conſtitution and temper of the ſeveral parties, and the characters of the principal perſons who figured at that time on the public ſtage, are to be ſeen there in a ſtronger and truer light than they would have appeared perhaps if he had writ purpoſely on this ſubject, and even in thoſe memorials which he ſomewhere promiſes ATTICUS to write. " Excudam aliquod Heraclidium opus, „ quod lateat in theſauris tuis. " He would hardly have unmasked in ſuch a work, as freely as in familiar occaſional letters, POMPEY, CATO, BRUTUS, nay himſelf; the four men of Rome, on whoſe praiſes he dwelt with the greateſt complacency. The age in which LIVY flouriſhed abounded with ſuch materials as theſe: they were fresh, they were authentic; it was eaſy to procure them, it was ſafe to employ them. How he did employ them in executing the ſecond part of his deſign, we may judge by his execution of the firſt: and, I own to your lordship, I should be glad to

exchange, if it were poſſible, what we have of this hiſtory for what we have not. Would you not be glad, my lord, to ſee, in one ſtupendous draught, the whole progreſs of that government from liberty to ſervitude? the whole ſeries of cauſes and effects, apparent and real, public and private? thoſe which all men ſaw, and all good men lamented and oppoſed at the time; and thoſe which were ſo diſguiſed to the prejudices, to the partialities of a divided people, and even to the corruption of mankind, that many did not, and that many could pretend they did not, diſcern them, till it was too late to reſiſt them? I am ſorry to ſay it, this part of the Roman hiſtory would be not only more curious and more authentic than the former, but of more immediate and more important application to the preſent ſtate of Britain. But it is loſt: the loſs is irreparable, and your lordship will not blame me for deploring it.

III. THEY who ſet up for ſcepticiſm may not regret the loſs of ſuch an hiſtory: but this I will be bold to aſſert to them, that an hiſtory muſt be writ on this plan, and muſt aim at leaſt at theſe perfections, or it will anſwer ſufficiently none of the intentions of hiſtory. That it will not anſwer ſufficiently the intention I have inſiſted upon in theſe letters, that of inſtructing poſterity by the example of former ages, is manifeſt: and I think it is as manifeſt, that an hiſtory cannot be ſaid even to relate faithfully, and inform us truly, that does not relate fully, and inform us of all that is neceſſary to make a true judgment concerning the

matters contained in it. Naked facts, without the cauſes that produced them and the circumſtances that accompanied them, are not ſufficient to characteriſe actions or counſels. The nice degrees of wiſdom and of folly, of virtue and of vice, will not only be undiſcoverable in them; but we muſt be very often unable to determine under which of theſe characters they fall in general. The ſceptics I am ſpeaking of are therefore guilty of this abſurdity: the nearer an hiſtory comes to the true idea of hiſtory, the better it informs and the more it inſtructs us, the more worthy to be rejected it appears to them. I have ſaid and allowed enough to content any reaſonable man about the uncertainty of hiſtory. I have owned that the beſt are defective, and I will add in this place an obſervation which did not, I think, occur to me before. Conjecture is not always diſtinguiſhed perhaps as it ought to be; ſo that an ingenious writer may ſometimes do very innocently, what a malicious writer does very criminally as often as he dares, and as his malice requires it; he may account for events after they have happened, by a ſyſtem of cauſes and conduct that did not really produce them, though it might poſſibly or even probably have produced them. But this obſervation, like ſeveral others, becomes a reaſon for examining and comparing authorities, and for preferring ſome, not for rejecting all. DAVILA, a noble hiſtorian ſurely, and one whom I ſhould not ſcruple to confeſs equal in many reſpects to LIVY, as I ſhould not ſcruple to prefer his countryman GUICCIARDIN to THUCYDIDES in every reſpect: DAVILA, my lord, was

accuſed, from the firſt publication of his hiſtory, or at leaſt was ſuſpected, of too much refinement and ſubtilty, in developing the ſecret motives of actions, in laying the cauſes of events too deep, and deducing them often through a ſeries of progreſſions too complicated, and too artiſtly wrought. But yet the ſuſpicious perſon who ſhould reject this hiſtorian upon ſuch general inducements as theſe, would have no grace to oppoſe his ſuſpicions to the authority of the firſt duke of EPERNON, who had been an actor, and a principal actor too, in many of the ſcenes that DAVILA recites. GIRARD, ſecretary to this duke, and no contemptible biographer, relates, that this hiſtory came down to the place where the old man reſided in Gaſcony, a little before his death; that he read it to him, that the duke confirmed the truth of the narrations in it, and ſeemed only ſurpriſed by what means the author could be ſo well informed of the moſt ſecret councils and meaſures of thoſe times.

IV. I HAVE ſaid enough on this head, and your lordſhip may be induced perhaps, by what I have ſaid, to think with me, that ſuch hiſtories as theſe, whether ancient or modern, deſerve alone to be ſtudied. Let us leave the credulous learned to write hiſtory without materials, or to ſtudy thoſe who do ſo; to wrangle about ancient traditions, and to ring different changes on the ſame ſet of bells. Let us leave the ſceptics, in modern as well as ancient hiſtory, to triumph in the notable diſcovery of the ides of one month miſtaken for the calends of another, or in the various dates and

contradictory circumſtances which they find in weekly gazettes and monthly mercuries. Whilſt they are thus employed, your lordship and I will proceed, if you pleaſe, to conſider more cloſely, than we have yet done, the rule mentioned above; that I mean of uſing diſcernment and choice in the ſtudy of the moſt authentic hiſtory, that of not wandering in the light, which is as neceſſary as that of not groping in the dark.

MAN is the ſubject of every hiſtory; and to know him well, we muſt ſee him and conſider him, as hiſtory alone can preſent him to us, in every age, in every country, in every ſtate, in life and in death. Hiſtory therefore of all kinds, of civilized and uncivilized, of ancient and modern nations, in short of all hiſtory, that deſcends to a ſufficient detail of human actions and characters, is uſeful to bring us acquainted with our ſpecies, nay with ourſelves. To teach and to inculcate the general principles of virtue, and the general rules of wiſdom and good policy, which reſult from ſuch details of actions and characters, comes for the moſt part, and always should come, expreſsly and directly into the deſign of thoſe who are capable of giving ſuch details: and therefore whilſt they narrate as hiſtorians, they hint often as philoſophers; they put into our hands, as it were, on every proper occaſion, the end of a clue, that ſerves to remind us of ſearching, and to guide us in the ſearch of that truth which the example before us either eſtabliſhes or illuſtrates. If a writer neglects this part, we are able however to ſupply his neglect by our own attention and

induſtry: and when he gives us a good hiſtory of Peruvians or Mexicans, of Chineſe or Tartars, of Muſcovites or Negroes, we may blame him, but we muſt blame ourſelves much more, if we do not make it a good leſſon of philoſophy. This being the general uſe of hiſtory, it is not to be neglected. Every one may make it, who is able to read and to reflect on what he reads: and every one who makes it will find, in his degree, the benefit that ariſes from an early acquaintance contracted in this manner with mankind. We are not only paſſengers or ſojourners in this world, but we are abſolute ſtrangers at the firſt ſteps we make in it. Our guides are often ignorant, often unfaithful. By this map of the country, which hiſtory ſpreads before us, we may learn, if we pleaſe, to guide ourſelves. In our journey through it, we are beſet on every ſide. We are beſieged ſometimes even in our ſtrongeſt holds. Terrors and temptations, conducted by the paſſions of other men, aſſault us: and our own paſſions, that correſpond with theſe, betray us. Hiſtory is a collection of the journals of thoſe who have travelled through the ſame country, and been expoſed to the ſame accidents: and their good and their ill ſucceſs are equally inſtructive. In this purſuit of knowledge an immenſe field is opened to us: general hiſtories, ſacred and prophane; the hiſtories of particular countries, particular events, particular orders, particular men; memorials, anecdotes, travels. But we muſt not ramble in this field without diſcernment or choice, nor even with theſe muſt we ramble too long.

As to the choice of authors, who have writ on all theſe various ſubjects, ſo much has been ſaid by learned men concerning all thoſe that deſerve attention, and their ſeveral characters are ſo well eſtabliſhed, that it would be a ſort of pedantic affectation to lead your lordſhip through ſo voluminous, and at the ſame time ſo eaſy, a detail. I paſs it over therefore in order to obſerve, that as ſoon as we have taken this general view of mankind, and of the courſe of human affairs in different ages and different parts of the world, we ought to apply, and, the ſhortneſs of human life conſidered, to confine ourſelves almoſt entirely, in our ſtudy of hiſtory, to ſuch hiſtories as have an immediate relation to our profeſſions, or to our rank and ſituation in the ſociety to which we belong. Let me inſtance in the profeſſion of divinity, as the nobleſt and the moſt important.

(1) I HAVE ſaid ſo much concerning the ſhare which divines of all religions have taken in the corruption of hiſtory, that I ſhould have anathemas pronounced againſt me, no doubt, in the eaſt and the weſt, by the dairo, the mufti, and the pope, if theſe letters were ſubmitted to eccleſiaſtical cenſure; for ſurely, my lord, the clergy have a better title, than the ſons of Apollo, to be called "genus irritabile vatum." What would it be, if I went about to ſhew, how many of the chriſtian clergy abuſe, by miſrepreſentation and falſe quotation, the hiſtory they can no longer corrupt? And yet this task would not be even to me, an hard one. But as I mean to ſpeak in this place of

chriſtian divines alone, ſo I mean to ſpeak of ſuch of them particularly as may be called divines without any ſneer; of ſuch of them, for ſome ſuch I think there are, as believe themſelves, and would have mankind believe; not for temporal but ſpiritual intereſt, not for the ſake of the clergy, but for the ſake of mankind. Now it has been long matter of aſtonishment to me, how ſuch perſons as theſe could take ſo much ſilly pains to eſtablish myſtery on metaphyſics, revelation on philoſophy, and matters of fact on abſtract reaſoning? A religion founded on the authority of a divine miſſion, confirmed by propheſies and miracles, appeals to facts: and the facts muſt be proved as all other facts that paſs for authentic are proved; for faith, ſo reaſonable after this proof is abſurd before it. If they are thus proved, the religion will prevail without the aſſiſtance of ſo much profound reaſoning: if they are not thus proved, the authority of it will ſink in the world even with this aſſiſtance. The divines object in their diſputes with atheiſts, and they object very juſtly, that theſe men require improper proofs; proofs that are not ſuited to the nature of the ſubject, and then cavil that ſuch proofs are not furnished. But what then do they mean, to fall into the ſame abſurdity themſelves in their diſputes with theiſts, and to din improper proofs in ears that are open to proper proofs? The matter is of great moment, my lord, and I make no excuſe for the zeal which obliges me to dwell a little on it. A ſerious and honeſt application to the ſtudy of eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, and

every part of prophane hiſtory and chronology relative to it, is incumbent on ſuch reverend perſons as are here ſpoken of, on a double account: becauſe hiſtory alone can furniſh the proper proofs, that the religion they teach is of God; and becauſe the unfair manner, in which theſe proofs have been and are daily furniſhed, creates prejudices, and gives advantages againſt chriſtianity that require to be removed. No ſcholar will dare to deny, that falſe hiſtory, as well as ſham miracles, has been employed to propagate chriſtianity formerly: and whoever examines the writers of our own age will find the ſame abuſe of hiſtory continued. Many and many inſtances of this abuſe might be produced. It is grown into cuſtom, writers copy one another, and the miſtake that was committed, or the falſhood that was invented by one, is adopted by hundreds.

ABBADIE ſays in his famous book, that the goſpel of St. MATTHEW is cited by CLEMENS biſhop of Rome, a diſciple of the Apoſtles; that BARNABAS cites it in his epiſtle; that IGNATIUS and POLYCARPE receive it; and that the ſame fathers, that give teſtimony for MATTHEW, give it likewiſe for MARK. Nay your lordſhip will find, I believe, that the preſent biſhop of London, in his third paſtoral letter, ſpeaks to the ſame effect. I will not trouble you nor myſelf with any more inſtances of the ſame kind. Let this, which occurred to me as I was writing, ſuffice. It may well ſuffice; for I preſume the fact advanced by the miniſter and the biſhop is a miſtake. If the fathers

of the firſt century do mention ſome paſſages that are agreeable to what we read in our evangeliſts, will it follow that theſe fathers had the ſame goſpels before them? To ſay ſo is a manifeſt abuſe of hiſtory, and quite inexcuſable in writers that knew, or ſhould have known, that theſe fathers made uſe of other goſpels, wherein ſuch paſſages might be contained, or they might be preſerved in unwritten tradition. Beſides which I could almoſt venture to affirm that theſe fathers of the firſt century do not expreſsly name the goſpels we have of MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, and JOHN. To the two reaſons that have been given why thoſe who make divinity their profeſſion ſhould ſtudy hiſtory, particularly eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, with an honeſt and ſerious application; in order to ſupport chriſtianity againſt the attacks of unbelievers, and to remove the doubts and prejudices that the unfair proceedings of men of their own order have raiſed in minds candid but not implicit, willing to be informed but curious to examine; to theſe, I ſay, we may add another conſideration that ſeems to me of no ſmall importance. Writers of the Roman religion have attempted to ſhew, that the text of the holy writ is on many accounts inſufficient to be the ſole criterion of orthodoxy: I apprehend too that they have ſhewn it. Sure I am that experience, from the firſt promulgation of chriſtianity to this hour, ſhews abundantly with how much eaſe and ſucceſs the moſt oppoſite, the moſt extravagant, nay the moſt impious opinions, and the moſt contradictory faiths, may be founded on the ſame

text,

text, and plauſibly defended by the ſame authority. Writers of the reformed religion have erected their batteries againſt tradition; and the only difficulty they had to encounter in this enterpriſe lay in levelling and pointing their cannon ſo as to avoid demoliſhing in one common ruin, the traditions they retain, and thoſe they reject. Each ſide has been employed to weaken the cauſe and explode the ſyſtem of his adverſary: and, whilſt they have been ſo employed, they have jointly laid their axes to the root of chriſtianity; for thus men will be apt to reaſon upon what they have advanced. "If the text has not that authenticity, clearneſs, „ and preciſion which are neceſſary to eſtabliſh it „ as a divine and a certain rule of faith and prac- „ tice; and if the tradition of the church, from „ the firſt ages of it till the days of LUTHER and „ CALVIN, has been corrupted itſelf, and has „ ſerved to corrupt the faith and practice of chriſ- „ tians; there remains at this time no ſtandard at „ all of chriſtianity. By conſequence either this „ religion was not originally of divine inſtitution, „ or elſe God has not provided effectually for pre- „ ſerving the genuine purity of it, and the gates „ of hell have actually prevailed, in contradiction „ to his promiſe, againſt the church." The beſt effect of this reaſoning that can be hoped for, is, that men ſhould fall into theiſm, and ſubſcribe to the firſt propoſition: he muſt be worſe than an atheiſt who can affirm the laſt. The dilemma is terrible, my lord. Party-zeal and private intereſt have formed it: the common intereſt of chriſtianity

is deeply concerned to ſolve it. Now, I preſume, it can never be ſolved without a more accurate examination, not only of the chriſtian but of the jewiſh ſyſtem, than learned men have been hitherto impartial enough and ſagacious enough to take, or honeſt enough to communicate. Whilſt the authenticity and ſenſe of the text of the Bible remain as diſputable, and whilſt the tradition of the church remains as problematical, to ſay no worſe, as the immenſe labors of the chriſtian divines in ſeveral communions have made them appear to be; chriſtianity may lean on the civil and eccleſiaſtical power, and be ſupported by the forcible influence of education: but the proper force of religion, that force which ſubdues the mind and awes the conſcience by conviction, will be wanting.

I HAD reaſon therefore to produce divinity, as one inſtance of thoſe profeſſions that require a particular application to the ſtudy of ſome particular parts of hiſtory: and ſince I have ſaid ſo much on the ſubject in my zeal for chriſtianity, I will add this further. The reſurrection of letters was a fatal period; the chriſtian ſyſtem has been attacked, and wounded too, very ſeverely ſince that time. The defence has been better made indeed by modern divines, than it had been by ancient fathers and apologiſts. The moderns have invented new methods of defence, and have abandoned ſome poſts that were not tenable: but ſtill there are others, in defending which they lie under great diſadvantages. Such are various facts, piously believed in former times, but on which the truth

of chriſtianity has been reſted very imprudently in more enlightened ages; becauſe the falſity of ſome, and the groſs improbability of others are ſo evident, that, inſtead of anſwering the purpoſe for which they were invented, they have rendered the whole tenor of eccleſiaſtical hiſtory and tradition precarious, ever ſince a ſtrict but juſt application of the rules of criticiſm has been made to them. I touch theſe things lightly; but if your lordship reflects upon them, you will find reaſon perhaps to think as I do, that it is high time the clergy in all chriſtian communions should join their forces, and eſtabliſh thoſe hiſtorical facts, which are the foundations of the whole ſyſtem, on clear and unqueſtionable hiſtorical authority, ſuch as they require in all caſes of moment from others; reject candidly what cannot be thus eſtabliſhed; and purſue their enquiries in the ſame ſpirit of truth through all the ages of the church; without any regard to hiſtorians, fathers, or councils, more than they are ſtrictly entitled to on the face of what they have tranſmitted to us, on their own conſiſtency, and on the concurrence of other authority. Our paſtors would be thus, I preſume, much better employed than they generally are. Thoſe of the clergy who make religion merely a trade, who regard nothing more than the ſubſiſtence it affords them, or in higher life the wealth and power they enjoy by the means of it, may ſay to themſelves, that it will laſt their time, or that policy and reaſon of ſtate will preſerve the form of a church when the ſpirit of religion is

extinct. But thoſe whom I mentioned above, thoſe who act for ſpiritual not temporal ends, and are deſirous that men ſhould believe and practiſe the doctrines of chriſtianity, as well as go to church and pay tithes, will feel and own the weight of ſuch conſiderations as theſe; and agree, that however the people have been, and may be ſtill amuſed, yet chriſtianity has been in decay ever ſince the reſurrection of letters; and that it cannot be ſupported as it was ſupported before that æra, nor by any other way than that which I propoſe, and which a due application to the ſtudy of hiſtory, chronology, and criticiſm, would enable our divines to purſue, no doubt, with ſucceſs.

I MIGHT inſtance, in other profeſſions, the obligation men lie under of applying themſelves to certain parts of hiſtory, and I can hardly forbear doing it in that of the law; in it's nature the nobleſt and moſt beneficial to mankind, in it's abuſe and debaſement the moſt ſordid and the moſt pernicious. A lawyer now is nothing more, I ſpeak of ninety-nine in an hundred at leaſt, to uſe ſome of TULLY'S words, "niſi leguleius quidam „ cautus, et acutus praeco actionum, cantor for„ mularum, auceps ſyllabarum." But there have been lawyers that were orators, philoſophers, hiſtorians; there have been BACONS and CLARENDONS, my lord. There will be none ſuch any more, till, in ſome better age, true ambition or the love of fame prevails over avarice; and till men find leiſure and encouragement to prepare

themſelves for the exerciſe of this profeſſion, by climbing up to the "vantage ground," ſo my lord BACON calls it, of ſcience: inſtead of groveling all their lives below, in a mean but gainful application to all the little arts of chicane. Till this happen, the profeſſion of the law will ſcarce deſerve to be ranked among the learned profeſſions: and whenever it happens, one of the vantage grounds, to which men muſt climb, is metaphyſical, and the other, hiſtorical knowledge. They muſt pry into the ſecret receſſes of the human heart, and become well acquainted with the whole moral world, that they may diſcover the abſtract reaſon of all laws: and they muſt trace the laws of particular ſtates, eſpecially of their own, from the firſt rough sketches to the more perfect draughts; from the firſt cauſes or occaſions that produced them, through all the effects, good and bad, that they produced. But I am running inſenſibly into a ſubject, which would detain me too long from one that relates more immediately to your lordship, and with which I intend to conclude this long letter.

(2) I PASS from the conſideration of thoſe profeſſions to which particular parts or kinds of hiſtory ſeem to belong: and I come to ſpeak of the ſtudy of hiſtory, as a neceſſary mean to prepare men for the diſcharge of that duty which they owe to their country, and which is common to all the members of every ſociety that is conſtituted according to the rules of right reaſon, and with a due regard to the common good. I have met,

in St. Real's works, or ſome other French book, with a ridicule caſt on private men who make hiſtory a political ſtudy, or who apply themſelves in any manner to affairs of ſtate. But the reflection is too general. In governments ſo arbitrary by their conſtitution, that the will of the prince is not only the ſupreme but the ſole law, it is ſo far from being a duty that it may be dangerous, and muſt be impertinent in men, who are not called by the prince to the adminiſtration of public affairs, to concern themſelves about it, or to fit themſelves for it. The ſole vocation there is the favor of the court; and whatever deſignation God makes by the talents he beſtows, though it may ſerve, which it ſeldom ever does, to direct the choice of the prince, yet I preſume that it cannot become a reaſon to particular men, or create a duty on them, to devote themſelves to the public ſervice. Look on the Turkish government. See a fellow taken, from rowing in a common paſſage-boat, by the caprice of the prince: ſee him inveſted next day with all the power the ſoldans took under the caliphs, or the mayors of the palace under the ſucceſſors of Clovis: ſee a whole empire governed by the ignorance, inexperience, and arbitrary will of this tyrant, and a few other ſubordinate tyrants, as ignorant and unexperienced as himſelf. In France indeed, though an abſolute government, things go a little better. Arts and ſciences are encouraged, and here and there an example may be found of a man who has riſen by ſome extraordinary talents, amidſt

innumerable examples of men who have arrived at the greateſt honors and higheſt poſts by no other merit than that of aſſiduous fawning, attendances, or of skill in ſome deſpicable puerile amuſement; in training waſps, for inſtance, to take regular flights like hawks, and ſtoop at flies. The nobility of France, like the children of tribute among the ancient Saracens and modern Turks, are ſet apart for wars. They are bred to make love, to hunt, and to fight: and, if any of them ſhould acquire knowledge ſuperior to this, they would acquire that which might be prejudicial to themſelves, but could not become beneficial to their country. The affairs of ſtate are truſted to other hands. Some have riſen to them by drudging long in buſineſs: ſome have been made miniſters almoſt in the cradle: and the whole power of the government has been abandoned to others in the dotage of life. There is a monarchy, an abſolute monarchy too, I mean that of China, wherein the adminiſtration of the government is carried on, under the direction of the prince, ever ſince the dominion of the Tartars has been eſtabliſhed, by ſeveral claſſes of Mandarins, and according to the deliberation and advice of ſeveral orders of councils: the admiſſion to which claſſes and orders depends on the abilities of the candidates, as their riſe in them depends on the behaviour they hold, and the improvements they make afterwards. Under ſuch a government, it is neither impertinent nor ridiculous, in any of the ſubjects who are invited by their circumſtances, or puſhed to it by their

talents, to make the hiſtory of their own and of other countries a political ſtudy, and to fit themſelves by this and all other ways for the ſervice of the public. It is not dangerous neither; or an honor, that outweighs the danger, attends it: ſince private men have a right by the ancient conſtitution of this government, as well as councils of ſtate, to repreſent to the prince the abuſes of his adminiſtration. But ſtill men have not there the ſame occaſion to concern themſelves in the affairs of the ſtate, as the nature of a free government gives to the members of it. In our own country, for in our own the forms of a free government at leaſt are hitherto preſerved, men are not only deſigned for the public ſervice by the circumſtances of their ſituation, and their talents, all which may happen in others: but they are deſigned to it by their birth in many caſes, and in all caſes they may dedicate themſelves to this ſervice, and take, in different degrees, ſome share in it, whether they are called to it by the prince or no. In abſolute governments, all public ſervice is to the prince, and he nominates all thoſe that ſerve the public. In free governments, there is a diſtinct and a principal ſervice due to the ſtate. Even the king, of ſuch a limited monarchy as ours, is but the firſt ſervant of the people. Among his ſubjects, ſome are appointed by the conſtitution, and others are elected by the people, to carry on the exercice of the legislative power jointly with him, and to controul the executive power independently on him. Thus

your lordship is born a member of that order of men, in whom a third part of the ſupreme power of the government reſides: and your right to the exerciſe of the power belonging to this order not being yet opened, you are choſen into another body of men, who have a different power and a different conſtitution, but who poſſeſs another third part of the ſupreme legiſlative authority, for as long a time as the commiſſion or truſt delegated to them by the people laſts. Free-men, who are neither born to the firſt, nor elected to the laſt, have a right however to complain, to repreſent, to petition, and, I add, even to do more in caſes of the utmoſt extremity. For ſure there cannot be a greater abſurdity, than to affirm, that the people have a remedy in reſiſtance, when their prince attempts to enslave them; but that they have none, when their repreſentatives ſell themſelves and them.

THE ſum of what I have been ſaying is, that, in free governments, the public ſervice is not confined to thoſe whom the prince appoints to different poſts in the adminiſtration under him; that there the care of the ſtate is the care of multitudes; that many are called to it in a particular manner by their rank, and by other circumſtances of their ſituation; and that even thoſe whom the prince appoints are not only anſwerable to him, but like him, and before him, to the nation, for their behaviour in their ſeveral poſts. It can never be impertinent nor ridiculous therefore in ſuch a country, whatever it might be in the

abbot of ST. REAL's, which was Savoy I think; or in Peru, under the Incas, where, GARCILASSO DE LA VEGA ſays, it was lawful for none but the nobility to ſtudy — for men of all degrees to inſtruct themſelves in thoſe affairs wherein they may be actors, or judges of thoſe that act, or controulers of thoſe that judge. On the contrary, it is incumbent on every man to inſtruct himſelf, as well as the means and opportunities he has permit, concerning the nature and intereſts of the governments, and thoſe rights and duties that belong to him, or to his ſuperiors, or to his inferiors. This in general; but in particular, it is certain that the obligations under which we lie to ſerve our country increaſe, in proportion to the ranks we hold, and the other circumſtances of birth, fortune, and ſituation that call us to this ſervice; and, above all, to the talents which God has given us to perform it.

IT is in this view, that I ſhall addreſs to your lordship whatever I have further to ſay on the ſtudy of hiſtory.

LETTER VI.

From what period modern hiſtory is peculiarly uſeful to the ſervice of our country, viz.

From the end of the fifteenth century to the preſent.

The diviſion of this into three particular periods:

In order to a ſketch of the hiſtory and ſtate of Europe from that time.

SINCE then you are, my lord, by your birth, by the nature of our government, and by the talents God has given you, attached for life to the ſervice of your country; ſince genius alone cannot enable you to go through this ſervice with honor to yourſelf and advantage to your country, whether you ſupport or whether you oppoſe the adminiſtrations that ariſe; ſince a great ſtock of knowledge, acquired betimes and continually improved, is neceſſary to this end; and ſince one part of this ſtock muſt be collected from the ſtudy of hiſtory, as the other part is to be gained by obſervation and experience; I come now to ſpeak to your lordſhip of ſuch hiſtory as has an immediate relation to the great duty and buſineſs of your life, and of the method to be obſerved in this ſtudy. The notes I have by me, which were

of ſome little uſe thus far, ſerve me no farther, and I have no books to conſult. No matter; I ſhall be able to explain my thoughts without their aſſiſtance, and leſs liable to be tedious. I hope to be as full and as exact on memory alone, as the manner in which I ſhall treat the ſubject requires me to be.

I SAY then, that however cloſely affairs are linked together in the progreſſion of governments, and how much ſoever events that follow are dependent on thoſe that precede, the whole connexion diminiſhes to ſight as the chain lengthens; till as laſt it ſeems to be broken, and the links that are continued from that point bear no proportion nor any ſimilitude to the former. I would not be underſtood to ſpeak only of thoſe great changes, that are wrought by a concurrence of extraordinary events; for inſtance the expulſion of one nation, the deſtruction of one government, and the eſtabliſhment of another: but even of thoſe that are wrought in the ſame governments and among the ſame people, ſlowly and almoſt imperceptibly, by the neceſſary effects of time, and flux condition of human affairs. When ſuch changes as theſe happen in ſeveral ſtates about the ſame time, and conſequently affect other ſtates by their vicinity, and by many different relations which they frequently bear to one another; then is one of thoſe periods formed, at which the chain ſpoken of is ſo broken as to have little or no real or viſible connexion with that which we ſee continue. A new ſituation, different from the former,

begets new intereſts in the ſame proportion of difference; not in this or that particular ſtate alone, but in all thoſe that are concerned by vicinity or other relations, as I ſaid juſt now, in one general ſyſtem of policy. New intereſts beget new maxims of government, and new methods of conduct. Theſe, in their turns, beget new manners, new habits, new cuſtoms. The longer this new conſtitution of affairs continues, the more will this difference increaſe: and although ſome analogy may remain long between what preceded and what ſucceeded ſuch a period, yet will this analogy ſoon become an object of mere curioſity, not of profitable enquiry. Such a period therefore is, in the true ſenſe of the words, an epocha or an aera, a point of time at which you ſtop, or from which you reckon forward. I ſay forward; becauſe we are not to ſtudy in the preſent caſe, as chronologers compute, backward. Should we perſiſt to carry our reſearches much higher, and to push them even to ſome other period of the ſame kind, we should miſemploy our time; the cauſes then laid having ſpent themſelves, the ſeries of effects derived from them being over, and our concern in both conſequently at an end. But a new ſyſtem of cauſes and effetcs, that ſubſiſts in our time, and whereof our conduct is to be a part, ariſing at the laſt period, and all that paſſes in our time being dependent on what has paſſed ſince that period, or being immediately relative to it, we are extremely concerned to be well informed about all thoſe paſſages. To be entirely ignorant: about the

ages that precede this aera would be shameful. Nay ſome indulgence may be had to a temperate curioſity in the review of them. But to be learned about them is a ridiculous affectation in any man who means to be uſeful to the preſent age. Down to this aera let us read hiſtory: from this aera, and down to our own time, let us ſtudy it.

THE end of the fifteenth century ſeems to be juſt ſuch a period as I have been deſcribing, for thoſe who live in the eighteenth, and who inhabit the weſtern parts of Europe. A little before, or a little after this point of time, all thoſe events happened, and all thoſe revolutions began, that have produced ſo vaſt a change in the manners, cuſtoms, and intereſts of particular nations, and in the whole policy, eccleſiaſtical and civil, of theſe parts of the world. I muſt deſcend here into ſome detail, not of hiſtories, collections, or memorials; for all theſe are well enough known: and though the contents are in the heads of few, the books are in the hands of many. But inſtead of ſhewing your lordship where to look, I ſhall contribute more to your entertainment and inſtruction, by marking out, as well as my memory will ſerve me to do it, what you are to look for, and by furniſhing a kind of clue to your ſtudies. I ſhall give, according to cuſtom, the firſt place to religion.

A view of the eccleſiaſtical government of Europe from the beginning of the ſixteenth century.

OBSERVE then, my lord, that the demolition of the papal throne was not attempted with ſucceſs till the beginning of the ſixteenth century. If you are curious to caſt your eyes back, you will find BERENGER in the eleventh, who was ſoon ſilenced; ARNOLDUS in the ſame, who was ſoon hanged; VALDO in the twelfth, and our WICKLIFF in the fourteenth, as well as others perhaps whom I do not recollect. Sometimes the doctrines of the church were alone attacked; and ſometimes the doctrine, the diſcipline, and the uſurpations of the pope. But little fires, kindled in corners of a dark world, were ſoon ſtifled by that great abettor of chriſtian unity, the hangman. When they ſpread and blazed out, as in the caſe of the Albigeois and of the Huſſites, armies were raiſed to extinguish them by torrents of blood; and ſuch ſaints as DOMINIC, with the crucifix in their hands, inſtigated the troops to the utmoſt barbarity. Your lordship will find that the church of Rome was maintained by ſuch charitable and ſalutary means, among others, till the period ſpoken of: and you will be curious, I am ſure, to enquire how this period came to be more fatal to her than any former conjuncture. A multitude of circumſtances, which you will eaſily trace in the hiſtories of the fifteenth and ſixteenth centuries, to go no further back, concurred to bring about this great event: and a multitude of others

as eaſy to be traced, concurred to hinder the demolition from becoming total, and to prop the tottering fabric. Among theſe circumſtances, there is one leſs complicated and more obvious than others, which was of principal and univerſal influence. The art of printing had been invented about forty or fifty years before the period we fix: from that time, the reſurrection of letters haſtened on a-pace; and at this period they had made great progreſs, and were cultivated with great application. MAHOMET the ſecond drove them out of the eaſt into the weſt; and the popes proved worſe politicians than the mufties in this reſpect. NICHOLAS the fifth encouraged learning and learned men. SIXTUS the fourth was, if I miſtake not, a great collector of books at leaſt: and LEO the tenth was the patron of every art and ſcience. The magicians themſelves broke the charm by which they had bound mankind for ſo many ages: and the adventure of that knight-errant, who, thinking himſelf happy in the arms of a celeſtial nymph, found that he was the miſerable slave of an infernal hag, was in ſome ſort renewed. As ſoon as the means of acquiring and ſpreading information grew common, it is no wonder that a ſyſtem was unravelled, which could not have been woven with ſucceſs in any ages, but thoſe of groſs ignorance, and credulous ſuperſtition. I might point out to your lordship many other immediate cauſes, ſome general like this that I have mentioned, and ſome particular. The great ſchiſm, for inſtance, that ended in the beginning

beginning of the fifteenth century, and in the council of Conſtance, had occaſioned prodigious ſcandal. Two or three vicars of CHRIST, two or three infallible heads of the church, roaming about the world at a time, furniſhed matter of ridicule as well as ſcandal: and whilſt they appealed, for ſo they did in effect, to the laity, and reproached and excommunicated one another, they taught the world what to think of the inſtitution, as well as exerciſe of the papal authority. The ſame leſſon was taught by the council of Piſa, that preceded, and by that of Baſle, that followed the Council of Conſtance. The horrid crimes of ALEXANDER the ſixth, the ſawcy ambition of JULIUS the ſecond, the immenſe profuſion and ſcandalous exactions of LEO the tenth; all theſe events and characters, following in a continued ſeries from the beginning of one century, prepared the way for the revolution that happened in the beginning of the next. The ſtate of Germany, the ſtate of England, and that of the North, were particular cauſes, in theſe ſeveral countries, of this revolution. Such were many remarkable events that happened about the ſame time, and a little before it, in theſe and in other nations; and ſuch were likewiſe the characters of many of the princes of that age, ſome of whom favored the reformation, like the elector of Saxony, on a principle of conſcience; and moſt of whom favored it, juſt as others oppoſed it, on a principle of intereſt. This your lordship will diſcover manifeſtly to have been the caſe; and

the ſole difference you will find between HENRY the eighth and FRANCIS the firſt, one of whom ſeparated from the pope, as the other adhered to him, is this: HENRY the eighth divided, with the ſecular clergy and his people, the ſpoil of the pope, and his ſatellites, the monks: FRANCIS the firſt divided, with the pope, the ſpoil of his clergy, ſecular and regular, and of his people. With the ſame impartial eye that your lordship ſurveys the abuſes of religion, and the corruptions of the church as well as court of Rome, which brought on the reformation at this period; you will obſerve the characters and conduct of thoſe who began, who propagated, and who favored the reformation: and from your obſervation of theſe, as well as of the unſyſtematical manner in which it was carried on at the ſame time in various places, and of the want of concert, nay even of charity, among the reformers, you will learn what to think of the ſeveral religions that unite in their oppoſition to the Roman, and yet hate one another moſt heartily; what to think of the ſeveral ſects that have ſprouted, like ſuckers, from the ſame great roots; and what the true principles are of proteſtant eccleſiaſtical policy. This policy had no being till LUTHER made his eſtabliſhment in Germany; till ZWINGLIUS began another in Swiſſerland, which CALVIN carried on, and, like AMERICUS VESPUCIUS who followed CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS, robbed the firſt adventurer of his honor; and till the reformation in our country was perfected under EDWARD the ſixth

and ELIZABETH. Even popish eccleſiaſtical policy is no longer the ſame ſince that aera. His holineſs is no longer at the head of the whole weſtern church: and to keep the part that adheres to him, he is obliged to looſen their chains, and to lighten his yoke. The ſpirit and pretenſions of his court are the ſame, but not the power. He governs by expedient and management more, and by authority leſs. His decrees and his briefs are in danger of being refuſed, explained away, or evaded, unleſs he negociates their acceptance before he gives them, governs in concert with his flock, and feeds his sheep according to their humor and intereſt. In short, his excommunications, that made the greateſt emperors tremble, are deſpiſed by the loweſt members of his own communion; and the remaining attachment to him has been, from this aera, rather a political expedient to preſerve an appearance of unity, than a principle of conſcience; whatever ſome bigotted princes may have thought, whatever ambitious prelates and hireling ſcribblers may have taught, and whatever a people, worked up to enthuſiaſm by fanatical preachers, may have acted. Proofs of this would be eaſy to draw, not only from the conduct of ſuch princes as FERDINAND the firſt and MAXIMILIAN the ſecond, who could ſcarce be eſteemed papiſts though they continued in the pope's communion: but even from that of princes who perſecuted their proteſtant ſubjects with great violence. Enough has been ſaid, I think to shew your lordship how little need there is of going up higher than the beginning

of the ſixteenth century in the ſtudy of hiſtory, to acquire all the knowledge neceſſary at this time in eccleſiaſtical policy, or in civil policy as far as it is relative to this. Hiſtorical monuments of this ſort are in every man's hand, the facts are ſufficiently verified, and the entire ſcenes lie open to our obſervation: even that ſcene of ſolemn refined banter exhibited in the council of Trent, impoſes on no man who reads PAOLO, as well as PALLAVICINI, and the letters of VARGAS.

A view of the civil government of Europe in the beginning of the ſixteenth century.

I. In FRANCE.

A VERY little higher need we go, to obſerve thoſe great changes in the civil conſtitutions of the principal nations of Europe, in the partition of power among them, and by conſequence in the whole ſyſtem of European policy, which have operated ſo ſtrongly for more than two centuries, and which operate ſtill. I will not affront the memory of our HENRY the ſeventh ſo much as to compare him to LEWIS the eleventh: and yet I perceive ſome reſemblance between them; which would perhaps appear greater, if PHILIP of Commines had wrote the Hiſtory of HENRY as well as that of LEWIS; or if my lord BACON had wrote that of LEWIS as well as that of HENRY. This prince came to the crown of England a little before the cloſe of the fifteenth century: and LEWIS

began his reign in France about twenty years ſooner. Theſe reigns make remarkable periods in the hiſtories of both nations. To reduce the power, privileges, and poſſeſſions of the nobility, and to increaſe the wealth and authority of the crown, was the principal object of both. In this their ſucceſs was ſo great, that the conſtitutions of the two governments have had, ſince that time, more reſemblance, in name and in form than in reality, to the conſtitutions that prevailed before. LEWIS the eleventh was the firſt, ſay the French, "qui „ mit les rois hors de page." The independency of the nobility had rendered the ſtate of his predeceſſors very dependent, and their power precarious. They were the ſovereigns of great vaſſals; but theſe vaſſals were ſo powerful, that one of them was ſometimes able, and two or three of them always, to give law to the ſovereign. Before LEWIS came to the crown, the English had been driven out of their poſſeſſions in France, by the poor character of HENRY the ſixth, the domeſtic troubles of his reign, and the defection of the houſe of Burgundy from his alliance, much more than by the ability of CHARLES the ſeventh, who ſeems to have been neither a greater hero nor a greater politician than HENRY the ſixth; and even than by the vigor and union of the French nobility in his ſervice. After LEWIS came to the crown, EDWARD the fourth made a ſhew of carrying the war again into France; but he ſoon returned home, and your lordſhip will not be at a loſs to find much better reaſons for his doing ſo, in the

ſituation of his affairs and the characters of his allies, than thoſe which PHILIP of Commines draws from the artifice of LEWIS, from his good cheer, and his penſions. Now from this time our pretenſions on France were in effect given up: and CHARLES the bold, the laſt prince of the houſe of Burgundy, being killed, LEWIS had no vaſſal able to moleſt him. He re-united the dutchy of Burgundy and Artois to his crown, he acquired Provence by gift, and his ſon Britany by marriage: and thus France grew, in the courſe of a few years, into that great and compact body which we behold at this time. The Hiſtory of France before this period, is like that of Germany, a complicated hiſtory of ſeveral ſtates and ſeveral intereſts; ſometimes concurring like members of the ſame monarchy, and ſometimes warring on one another. Since this period, the hiſtory of France is the hiſtory of one ſtate under a more uniform and orderly government; the hiſtory of a monarchy wherein the prince is poſſeſſor of ſome, as well as lord of all the great fiefs: and, the authority of many tyrants centering in one, though the people are not become more free, yet the whole ſyſtem of domeſtic policy is entirely changed. Peace at home is better ſecured, and the nation grown fitter to carry war abroad. The governors of great provinces and of ſtrong fortreſſes have oppoſed their king, and taken arms againſt his authority and commiſſion ſince that time: but yet there is no more reſſemblance between the authority and pretenſions of theſe governors, or the nature and

occaſions of theſe diſputes, and the authority and pretenſions of the vaſſals of the crown in former days, or the nature and occaſions of their diſputes with the prince and with one another, than there is between the ancient and the preſent peers of France. In a word, the conſtitution is ſo altered, that any knowledge we can acquire about it, in the hiſtory that precedes this period, will ſerve to little purpoſe in our ſtudy of the hiſtory that follows it, and to leſs purpoſe ſtill in aſſiſting us to judge of what paſſes in the preſent age. The kings of France ſince that time, more maſters at home, have been able to exert themſelves more abroad: and they began to do ſo immediately; for CHARLES the eighth, ſon and ſucceſſor of LEWIS the eleventh, formed great deſigns of foreign conqueſts, though they were diſappointed by his inability, by the levity of the nation, and by other cauſes. LEWIS the twelfth and FRANCIS the firſt, but eſpecially FRANCIS, meddled deep in the affairs of Europe: and though the ſuperior genius of FERDINAND called the catholic, and the ſtar of CHARLES the fifth prevailed againſt them, yet the efforts they made ſhew ſufficiently how the ſtrength and importance of this monarchy were increaſed in their time. From whence we may date likewiſe the rivalſhip of the houſe of France, for we may reckon that of Valois and that of Bourbon as one upon this occaſion, and the houſe of Auſtria; that continues at this day, and that has coſt ſo much blood and ſo much treaſure in the courſe of it.

II. In ENGLAND.

THOUGH the power and influence of the nobility ſunk in the great change that began under HENRY the ſeventh in England, as they did in that which began under LEWIS the eleventh in France; yet the new conſtitutions that theſe changes produced were very different. In France the lords alone loſt, the king alone gained; the clergy held their poſſeſſions and their immunities, and the people remained in a ſtate of mitigated ſlavery. But in England the people gained as well as the crown. The commons had already a ſhare in the legiſlature; ſo that the power and influence of the lords being broken by HENRY the ſeventh, and the property of the commons increaſing by the ſale that his ſon made of churchlands, the power of the latter increaſed of courſe by this change in a conſtitution, the forms whereof were favorable to them. The union of the roſes put an end to the civil wars of York and Lancaſter, that had ſucceeded thoſe we commonly call the barons wars, and the humor of warring in France, that had laſted near four hundred years under the Normans and Plantagenets for plunder as well as conqueſt, was ſpent. Our temple of JANUS was ſhut by HENRY the ſeventh. We neither laid waſte our own nor other countries any longer: and wiſe laws and a wiſe government changed inſenſibly the manners, and gave a new turn to the ſpirit of our people. We were no

longer the free-booters we had been. Our nation maintained her reputation in arms whenever the public intereſt or the public authority required it; but war ceaſed to be; what it had been, our principal and almoſt our ſole profeſſion. The arts of peace prevailed among us. We became husbandmen, manufacturers, and merchants, and we emulated neighbouring nations in literature. It is from this time that we ought to ſtudy the hiſtory of our country, my lord, with the utmoſt application. We are not much concerned to know with critical accuracy what were the ancient forms of our parliaments, concerning which, however, there is little room for diſpute from the reign of HENRY the third at leaſt; nor in short the whole ſyſtem of our civil conſtitution before HENRY the ſeventh, and of our eccleſiaſtical conſtitution before HENRY the eighth. But he who has not ſtudied and acquired a thorough knowledge of them both, from theſe periods down to the preſent time, in all the variety of events by which they have been affected, will be very unfit to judge or to take care of either. Juſt as little are we concerned to know, in any nice detail, what the conduct of our princes, relatively to their neighbours on the continent, was before this period, and at a time when the partition of power and a multitude of other circumſtances rendered the whole political ſyſtem of Europe ſo vaſtly different from that which has exiſted ſince. But he who has not traced this conduct from the period we fix, down to the preſent age, wants a principal

part of the knowledge that every English miniſter of ſtate ſhould have. Ignorance in the reſpects here ſpoken of is the leſs pardonable, becauſe we have more, and more authentic, means of information concerning this, than concerning any other period. Anecdotes enow to glut the curioſity of ſome perſons, and to ſilence all the captious cavils of others, will never be furniſhed by any portion of hiſtory; nor indeed can they according to the nature and courſe of human affairs: but he who is content to read and obſerve, like a ſenator and a ſtateſman, will find in our own and in foreign hiſtorians as much information as he wants, concerning the affairs of our iſland, her fortune at home and her conduct abroad, from the fifteenth century to the eighteenth. I refer to foreign hiſtorians, as well as to our own, for this ſeries of our own hiſtory; not only becauſe it is reaſonable to ſee in what manner the hiſtorians of other countries have related the tranſactions wherein we have been concerned, and what judgment they have made of our conduct, domeſtic and foreign, but for another reaſon likewiſe. Our nation has furniſhed as ample and as important matter, good and bad, for hiſtory, as any nation under the ſun: and yet we muſt yield the palm in writing hiſtory moſt certainly to the Italians and to the French, and, I fear, even to the Germans. The only two pieces of hiſtory we have, in any reſpect to be compared with the ancient, are, the reign of HENRY the ſeventh by my lord BACON, and the Hiſtory of

our civil war in the laſt century by your noble anceſtor my lord chancellor CLARENDON. But we have no general hiſtory to be compared with ſome of other countries: neither have we, which I lament much more, particular hiſtories, except the two I have mentioned, nor writers of memorials, nor collectors of monuments and anecdotes, to vie in number or in merit with thoſe that foreign nations can boaſt; from COMMINES, GUICCIARDIN, DU BELLAY, PAOLO, DAVILA, THUANUS, and a multitude of others, down through the whole period that I propoſe to your lordship. But although this be true to our shame; yet it is true likewiſe that we want no neceſſary means of information. They lie open to our induſtry and our diſcernment. Foreign writers are for the moſt part ſcarce worth reading when they ſpeak of our domeſtic affairs: nor are our English writers for the moſt part of greater value when they ſpeak of foreign affairs. In this mutual defect, the writers of other countries are, I think, more excuſable than ours: for the nature of our government, the political principles in which we are bred, our diſtinct intereſt as islanders, and the complicated various intereſts and humors of our parties, all theſe are ſo peculiar to ourſelves, and ſo different from the notions, manners and habits of other nations, that it is not wonderful they should be puzzled or should fall into error, when they undertake to give relations of events that reſult from all theſe, or to paſs any judgment upon them. But all theſe hiſtorians are mutually

defective, ſo they mutually ſupply each other's defects. We muſt compare them therefore, make uſe of our diſcernment, and draw our concluſions from both. If we proceed in this manner, we have an ample fund of hiſtory in our power, from whence to collect ſufficient authentic information; and we muſt proceed in this manner, even with our own hiſtorians of different religions, ſects, and parties, or run the riſque of being misled by domeſtic ignorance and prejudice in this caſe, as well as by foreign ignorance and prejudice in the other.

III. In SPAIN and the Empire.

SPAIN figured little in Europe till the latter part of the fifteenth century; till Caſtile and Arragon were united by the marriage of FERDINAND and ISABELLA; till the total expulſion of the Moors, and till the diſcovery of the Weſt-Indies. After this, not only Spain took a new form, and grew into immenſe power; but, the heir of FERDINAND and ISABELLA being heir likewiſe of the houſes of Burgundy and Auſtria, ſuch an extent of dominion accrued to him by all theſe ſucceſſions, and ſuch an addition of rank and authority by his election to the empire, as no prince had been maſter of in Europe from the days of CHARLES the great. It is proper to obſerve here how the policy of the Germans altered in the choice of an emperor, becauſe the effects of this alteration have been great. When RODOLPHUS of Hapsburg was

choſen in the year one thouſand two hundred and ſeventy, or about that time, the poverty and the low eſtate of this prince, who had been marshal of the court to a king of Bohemia, was an inducement to elect him. The diſorderly and lawleſs ſtate of the empire made the princes of it in thoſe days unwilling to have a more powerful head. But a contrary maxim took place at this aera: CHARLES the fifth and FRANCIS the firſt, the two moſt powerful princes of Europe, were the ſole candidates; for the elector of Saxony, who is ſaid to have declined, was rather unable to ſtand in competition with them: and CHARLES was choſen by the unanimous ſuffrages of the electoral college if I miſtake not. Another CHARLES, CHARLES the fourth, who was made emperor illegally enough on the depoſition of LEWIS of Bavaria, and about one hundred and fifty years before, ſeems to me to have contributed doubly to eſtabliſh this maxim; by the wiſe conſtitutions that he procured to paſs, that united the empire in a more orderly form and better ſyſtem of government; and by alienating the imperial revenues to ſuch a degree, that they were no longer ſufficient to ſupport an emperor who had not great revenues of his own. The ſame maxim and other circumſtances have concurred to keep the empire in this family ever ſince, as it had been often before; and this family having large dominions in the empire, and larger pretenſions, as well as dominions, out of it, the other ſtates of Europe, France, Spain and England particularly, have been more concerned ſince this

period in the affairs of Germany, than they were before it: and by conſequence the hiſtory of Germany, from the beginning of the ſixteenth century, is of importance, and a neceſſary part of that knowledge which your lordship deſires to acquire.

THE Dutch commonwealth was not formed till near a century later. But as ſoon as it was formed, nay even whilſt it was forming, theſe provinces, that were loſt to obſervation among the many that compoſed the dominions of Burgundy and Auſtria, became ſo conſiderable a part of the political ſyſtem of Europe, that their hiſtory muſt be ſtudied by every man who would inform himſelf of this ſyſtem.

SOON after this ſtate had taken being, others of a more ancient original began to mingle in thoſe diſputes and wars, thoſe councils, negociations, and treaties, that are to be the principal objects of your lordship's application in the ſtudy of hiſtory. That of the northern crowns deſerves your attention little, before the laſt century. Till the election of FREDERIC the firſt to the crown of Denmark, and till that wonderful revolution which the firſt GUSTAVUS brought about in Sweden, it is nothing more than a confuſed rhapſody of events, in which the great kingdoms and ſtates of Europe neither had any concern, nor took any part. From the time I have mentioned, the northern crowns have turned their counſels and their arms often ſouthwards, and Sweden particularly, with prodigious effect.

To what purpoſe should I trouble your lordship with the mention of hiſtories of other nations? they are either ſuch as have no relation to the knowledge you would acquire, like that of the Poles, the Muſcovites, or the Turks; or they are ſuch as, having an occaſional or a ſecondary relation to it, fall of courſe into your ſcheme; like the hiſtory of Italy for inſtance, which is ſometimes a part of that of France, ſometimes of that of Spain, and ſometimes of that of Germany. The thread of hiſtory, that you are to keep, is that of the nations who are and muſt always be concerned in the ſame ſcenes of action with your own. Theſe are the principal nations of the weſt. Things that have no immediate relation to your own country, or to them, are either too remote, or too minute, to employ much of your time: and their hiſtory and your own is, for all your purpoſes, the whole hiſtory of Europe.

THE two great powers, that of France and that of Auſtria, being formed, and a rivalship eſtabliſhed by conſequence between them; it began to be the intereſt of their neighbours to oppoſe the ſtrongeſt and moſt enterpriſing of the two, and to be the ally and friend of the weakeſt. From hence aroſe the notion of a balance of power in Europe, on the equal poize of which the ſafety and tranquillity of all muſt depend. To deſtroy the equality of this balance has been the aim of each of theſe rivals in his turn: and to hinder it from being deſtroyed, by preventing too much power from falling into one ſcale, has been the principle of all the wiſe councils

of Europe, relative to France and to the houſe of Auſtria, through the whole period that began at the aera we have fixed, and ſubſiſts at this hour. To make a careful and juſt obſervation, therefore, of the riſe and decline of theſe powers, in the two laſt centuries and in the preſent; of the projects which their ambition formed; of the means they employed to carry theſe projects on with ſucceſs; of the means employed by others to defeat them; of the iſſue of all theſe endeavours in war and in negociation; and particularly, to bring your obſervations home to your own country and your own uſe, of the conduct that England held, to her honor or dishonor, to her advantage or diſadvantage, in every one of the numerous and important conjunctures that happened — ought to be the principal ſubject of your lordship's attention in reading and reflecting on this part of modern hiſtory.

Now to this purpoſe you will find it of great uſe, my lord, when you have a general plan of the hiſtory in your mind, to go over the whole again in another method; which I propoſe to be this. Divide the entire period into ſuch particular periods as the general courſe of affairs will mark out to you ſufficiently, by the riſe of new conjunctures, of different ſchemes of conduct, and of different theatres of action. Examine this period of hiſtory as you would examine a tragedy or a comedy; that is, take firſt the idea or a general notion of the whole, and after that examine every act and every ſcene apart. Conſider them in themſelves, and conſider them relatively to one another.

Read

Read this hiſtory as you would that of any ancient period; but ſtudy it afterwards, as it would not be worth your while to ſtudy the other; nay as you could not have in your power the means of ſtudying the other, if the ſtudy was really worth your while. The former part of this period abounds in great hiſtorians: and the latter part is ſo modern, that even tradition is authentic enough to ſupply the want of good hiſtory, if we are curious to enquire, and if we hearken to the living with the ſame impartiality and freedom of judgment as we read the dead: and he that does one will do the other. The whole period abounds in memorials, in collections of public acts and monuments of private letters, and of treaties. All theſe muſt come into your plan of ſtudy, my lord: many not to be read through, but all to be conſulted and compared. They muſt not lead you, I think, to your enquiries, but your enquiries muſt lead you to them. By joining hiſtory and that which we call the materia hiſtorica together in this manner, and by drawing your information from both, your lordship will acquire not only that knowledge, which many have in ſome degree, of the great tranſactions that have paſſed, and the great events that have happened in Europe during this period, and of their immediate and obvious cauſes and conſequences; but your lordship will acquire a much ſuperior knowledge, and ſuch a one as very few men poſſeſs almoſt in any degree, a knowledge of the true political ſyſtem of Europe during this time. You will ſee it in it's primitive principles,

in the conſtitutions of governments, the ſituations of countries, their national and true intereſts, the characters and the religion of people, and other permanent circumſtances. You will trace it through all its fluctuations, and obſerve how the objects vary ſeldom, but the means perpetually, according to the different characters of princes and of thoſe who govern; the different abilities of thoſe who ſerve; the courſe of accidents, and a multitude of other irregular and contingent circumſtances.

THE particular periods into which the whole period ſhould be divided, in my opinion, are theſe. 1. From the fifteenth to the end of the ſixteenth century. 2. From thence to the Pyrenean treaty. 3. From thence down to the preſent time.

YOUR lordſhip will find this diviſion as apt and as proper, relatively to the particular hiſtories of England, France, Spain, and Germany, the principal nations concerned, as it is relatively to the general hiſtory of Europe.

THE death of queen ELIZABETH, and the acceſſion of king JAMES the firſt, made a vaſt alteration in the government of our nation at home, and in her conduct abroad, about the end of the firſt of theſe periods. The wars that religion occaſioned, and ambition fomented in France, through the reigns of FRANCIS the ſecond, CHARLES the ninth, HENRY the third, and a part of HENRY the fourth, ended: and the furies of the league were cruſhed by this great prince, about the ſame time. PHILIP the ſecond of Spain marks this period likewiſe by his death, and by the exhauſted condition in which

he left the monarchy he governed: which took the lead no longer in diſturbing the peace of mankind, but acted a ſecond part in abetting the bigotry and ambition of FERDINAND the ſecond and the third. The thirty years war that devaſted Germany did not begin till the eighteenth year of the ſeventeenth century, but the ſeeds of it were ſowing ſome time before, and even at the end of the ſixteenth. FERDINAND the firſt and MAXIMILIAN had ſhewn much lenity and moderation in the diſputes and troubles that aroſe on account of religion. Under RODOLPHUS and MATTHIAS, as the ſucceſſion of their couſin FERDINAND approached, the fires that were covered began to ſmoke and to ſparkle: and if the war did not begin with this century, the preparation for it, and the expectation of it did.

THE ſecond period ends in one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty, the year of the reſtoration of CHARLES the ſecond to the throne of England; when our civil wars, and all the diſorders which CROMWELL's uſurpation had produced, were over; and therefore a remarkable point of time, with reſpect to our country. It is no leſs remarkable with reſpect to Germany, Spain, and France.

As to Germany; the ambitious projects of the German branch of Auſtria had been entirely defeated, the peace of the empire had been reſtored, and almoſt a new conſtitution formed, or an old one revived, by the treaties of Weſtphalia; nay the imperial eagle was not only fallen, but her wings were clipped.

As to Spain; the Spanish branch was fallen as low twelve years afterwards, that is, in the year one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty. PHILIP the ſecond left his ſucceſſors a ruined monarchy. He left them ſomething worſe; he left them his example and his principles of government, founded in ambition, in pride, in ignorance, in bigotry, and all the pedantry of ſtate. I have read ſomewhere or other, that the war of the Low Countries alone coſt him, by his own confeſſion, five hundred and ſixty-four millions, a prodigious ſum in what ſpecies ſoever he reckoned. PHILIP the third and PHILIP the fourth followed his example and his principles of government, at home and abroad. At home, there was much form, but no good order, no œconomy, nor wiſdom of policy in the ſtate. The church continued to devour the ſtate, and that monſter the inquiſition to diſpeople the country, even more than perpetual war, and all the numerous colonies that Spain had ſent to the Weſt-Indies: for your lordſhip will find that PHILIP the third drove more than nine hundred thouſand Moriſcoes out of his dominions by one edict, with ſuch circumſtances of inhumanity in the execution of it, as Spaniards alone could exerciſe, and that tribunal who had provoked this unhappy race to revolt, could alone approve. Abroad, the conduct of theſe princes was directed by the ſame wild ſpirit of ambition: rash in undertaking though slow to execute, and obſtinate in purſuing though unable to ſucceed, they opened a new sluice to let

out the little life and vigor that remained in their monarchy. PHILIP the ſecond is ſaid to have been piqued againſt his uncle FERDINAND, for refuſing to yield the empire to him on the abdication of CHARLES the fifth. Certain it is, that as much as he loved to diſturb the peace of mankind, and to meddle in every quarrel that had the appearance of ſupporting the Roman and oppreſſing every other church, he meddled little in the affairs of Germany. But, FERDINAND and MAXIMILIAN, dead, and the offſpring of MAXIMILIAN, extinct, the kings of Spain eſpouſed the intereſts of the other branch of their family, entertained remote views of ambition in favor of their own branch, even on that ſide, and made all the enterpriſes of FERDINAND of Gratz, both before and after his elevation to the empire, the common cauſe of the houſe of Auſtria. What compleated their ruin was this: they knew not how to loſe, nor when to yield. They acknowledged the independency of the Dutch commonwealth, and became the allies of their ancient ſubjects at the treaty of Munſter: but they would not forego their uſurped claim on Portugal, and they perſiſted to carry on ſingly the war againſt France. Thus they were reduced to ſuch a lowneſs of power as can hardly be paralleled in any other caſe: and PHILIP the fourth was obliged at laſt to conclude a peace, on terms repugnant to his inclination, to that of his people, to the intereſt of Spain, and to that of all Europe, in the Pyrenean treaty.

As to France; this aera of the entire fall of the Spanish power is likewiſe that from which we may reckon that France grew as formidable, as we have ſeen her, to her neighbours, in power and pretenſions. HENRY the fourth meditated great deſigns, and prepared to act a great part in Europe in the very beginning of this period, when RAVAILLAC ſtabbed him. His deſigns died with him, and are rather gueſſed at than known; for ſurely thoſe which his hiſtorian PEREFIXE and the compilers of SULLY'S memorials aſcribe to him, of a chriſtian commonwealth, divided into fifteen ſtates, and of a ſenate to decide all differences, and to maintain this new conſtitution of Europe, are too chimerical to have been really his: but his general deſign of abaſing the houſe of Auſtria, and eſtabliſhing the ſuperior power in that of Bourbon, was taken up, about twenty years after his death, by RICHELIEU, and was purſued by him and by MAZARIN with ſo much ability and ſucceſs, that it was effected entirely by the treaties of Weſtphalia and by the Pyrenean treaty: that is, at the end of the ſecond of thoſe periods I have preſumed to propoſe to your lordship.

WHEN the third, in which we now are, will end, and what circumſtances will mark the end of it, I know not: but this I know, that the great events and revolutions, which have happened in the courſe of it, intereſt us ſtill more nearly than thoſe of the two precedent periods. I intended to have drawn up an elenchus or ſummary of the three, but I doubted, on further reflection,

whether my memory would enable me to do it with exactneſs enough: and I ſaw that, if I was able to do it, the deduction would be immeaſurably long. Something of this kind however it may be reaſonable to attempt, in ſpeaking of the laſt period: which may hereafter occaſion a further trouble to your lordship.

BUT to give you ſome breathing-time, I will poſtpone it at preſent, and am in the mean while,

My LORD,

Your, etc.

LETTER VII.

A sketch of the ſtate and hiſtory of Europe from the Pyrenean treaty in one thouſand ſix hundred and fifty nine, to the year one thouſand ſix hundred and eighty eight.

THE firſt obſervation I ſhall make on this third period of modern hiſtory is, that as the ambition of CHARLES the fifth, who united the whole formidable power of Auſtria in himſelf, and the reſtleſs temper, the cruelty, and bigotry of PHILIP the ſecond, were principally objects of the attention and ſolicitude of the councils of Europe, in the firſt of theſe periods; and as the ambition of FERDINAND the ſecond, and the third, who aimed at nothing leſs than extirpating the proteſtant intereſt, and under that pretence ſubduing the liberties of Germany, were objects of the ſame kind in the ſecond: ſo an oppoſition to the growing power of France, or to ſpeak more properly, to the exorbitant ambition of the houſe of Bourbon, has been the principal affair of Europe, during the greateſt part of the preſent period. The deſign of aſpiring to univerſal monarchy was imputed to CHARLES the fifth, as ſoon as he began to give proofs of his ambition and capacity. The ſame deſign was imputed to LEWIS the fourteenth, as ſoon as he began to feel his own ſtrength, and the weakneſs

of his neighbours. Neither of theſe princes was induced, I believe, by the flattery of his courtiers, or the apprehenſions of his adverſaries, to entertain ſo chimerical a deſign as this would have been, even in that falſe ſenſe wherein the word univerſal is ſo often underſtood: and I miſtake very much if either of them was of a character, or in circumſtances, to undertake it. Both of them had ſtrong deſires to raiſe their families higher, and to extend their dominions farther; but neither of them had that bold and adventurous ambition which makes a conqueror and an hero. Theſe apprehenſions however were given wiſely, and taken uſefully. They cannot be given nor taken too ſoon when ſuch powers as theſe ariſe; becauſe when ſuch powers as theſe are beſieged as it were early, by the common policy and watchfulneſs of their neighbours, each of them may in his turn of ſtrength ſally forth, and gain a little ground; but none of them will be able to push their conqueſts far, and much leſs to conſummate the entire projects of their ambition. Beſides the occaſional oppoſition that was given to CHARLES the fifth by our HENRY the eighth, according to the different moods of humor he was in; by the popes, according to the ſeveral turns of their private intereſt; and by the princes of Germany according to the occaſions or pretences that religion or civil liberty furniſhed, he had from his firſt ſetting out a rival and an enemy in FRANCIS the firſt, who did not maintain his cauſe "in forma pauperis," if I may uſe ſuch an expreſſion: as we have ſeen the houſe

of Auſtria ſue, in our days, for dominion at the gate of every palace in Europe. FRANCIS the firſt was the principal in his own quarrels, paid his own armies, fought his own battles; and though his valor alone did not hinder CHARLES the fifth from ſubduing all Europe, as BAYLE, a better philologer than politician, ſomewhere aſſerts, but a multitude of other circumſtances eaſily to be traced in hiſtory; yet he contributed by his victories, and even by his defeats, to waſte the ſtrength and check the courſe of that growing power. LEWIS the fourteenth had no rival of this kind in the houſe of Auſtria, nor indeed any enemy of this importance to combat, till the prince of Orange became king of Great Britain: and he had great advantages in many other reſpects, which it is neceſſary to conſider in order to make a true judgment on the affairs of Europe from the year one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty. You will diſcover the firſt of theſe advantages, and ſuch as were productive of all the reſt, in the conduct of RICHELIEU and of MAZARIN. RICHELIEU formed the great deſign, and laid the foundations; MAZARIN purſued the deſign, and raiſed the ſuperſtructure. If I do not deceive myſelf extremely, there are few paſſages in hiſtory that deſerve your lordſhip's attention more than the conduct that the firſt and greateſt of theſe miniſters held, in laying the foundations I ſpeak of. You will obſerve how he helped to embroil affairs on every ſide, and to keep the houſe of Auſtria at bay as it were; how he entered into the quarrels of Italy againſt Spain, into

that concerning the Valteline, and that concerning the ſucceſſion of Mantua; without engaging ſo deep as to divert him from another great object of his policy, ſubduing Rochelle and diſarming the Huguenots. You will obſerve how he turned himſelf, after this was done, to ſtop the progreſs of FERDINAND in Germany. Whilſt Spain fomented diſcontents at the court and diſorders in the kingdom of France, by all poſſible means, even by taking engagements with the duke of ROHAN, and for ſupporting the proteſtants; RICHELIEU abetted the ſame intereſt in Germany againſt FERDINAND; and in the Low Countries againſt Spain. The emperor was become almoſt the maſter in Germany. CHRISTIAN the fourth, king of Denmark, had been at the head of a league, wherein the United Provinces, Sweden, and Lower Saxony entered, to oppoſe his progreſs: but CHRISTIAN had been defeated by TILLY and VALSTEIN, and obliged to conclude a treaty at Lubec, where FERDINAND gave him the law. It was then that GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS, with whom RICHELIEU made an alliance, entered into this war, and ſoon turned the fortune of it. The French miniſter had not yet engaged his maſter openly in the war; but when the Dutch grew impatient, and threatened to renew their truce with Spain, unleſs France declared; when the king of SWEDEN was killed, and the battle of Nordlingen loſt; when Saxony had turned again to the ſide of the emperor, and Brandenburg and ſo many others had followed this example, that Heſſe almoſt alone perſiſted in the Swedish alliance:

then RICHELIEU engaged his maſter, and profited of every circumſtance which the conjuncture afforded, to engage him with advantage. For, firſt, he had a double advantage by engaging ſo late: that of coming fresh into the quarrel againſt a wearied and almoſt exhauſted enemy; and that of yielding to the impatience of his friends, who, preſſed by their neceſſities and by the want they had of France, gave this miniſter an opportunity of laying thoſe claims and eſtabliſhing thoſe pretenſions, in all his treaties with Holland, Sweden, and the princes and ſtates of the empire, on which he had projected the future aggrandiſement of France. The manner in which he engaged, and the air that he gave to his engagement, were advantages of the ſecond ſort, advantages of reputation and credit; yet were theſe of no ſmall moment in the courſe of the war, and operated ſtrongly in favor of France as he deſigned they ſhould, even after his death, and at and after the treaties of Weſtphalia. He varniſhed ambition with the moſt plauſible and popular pretences. The elector of TREVES had put himſelf under the protection of France: and, if I remember right, he made this ſtep when the emperor could not protect him againſt the Swedes, whom he had reaſon to apprehend. No matter, the governor of Luxemburg was ordered to ſurpriſe Treves and to ſeize the elector. He executed his orders with ſucceſs, and carried this prince priſoner into Brabant. RICHELIEU ſeized the lucky circumſtance; he reclaimed the elector: and on the refuſal of the cardinal infant, the war

was declared. France, you ſee, appeared the common friend of liberty, the defender of it in the Low Countries againſt the king of SPAIN, and in Germany againſt the emperor, as well as the protector of the princes of the empire, many of whoſe eſtates had been illegally invaded, and whoſe perſons were no longer ſafe from violence even in their own palaces. All theſe appearances were kept up in the negociations at Munſter, where MAZARIN reaped what RICHELIEU had ſowed. The demands that France made for herſelf were very great; but the conjuncture was favorable, and she improved it to the utmoſt. No figure could be more flattering than her's, at the head of theſe negociations; nor more mortifying than the emperor's through the whole courſe of the treaty. The princes and ſtates of the empire had been treated as vaſſals by the emperor: France determined them to treat with him on this occaſion as ſovereigns, and ſupported them in this determination. Whilſt Sweden ſeemed concerned for the proteſtant intereſt alone, and shewed no other regard, as she had no other alliance; France affected to be impartial alike to the proteſtant and to the papiſt, and to have no intereſt at heart but the common intereſt of the Germanic body. Her demands were exceſſive, but they were to be ſatisfied principally out of the emperor's patrimonial dominions. It had been the art of her miniſters to eſtabliſh this general maxim on many particular experiences, that the grandeur of France was a real, and would be a conſtant ſecurity to

the rights and liberties of the empire againſt the emperor: and it is no wonder therefore, this maxim prevailing, injuries, reſentments, and jealouſies being fresh on one ſide, and ſervices, obligations, and confidence on the other, that the Germans were not unwilling France should extend her empire on this ſide of the Rhine, whilſt Sweden did the ſame on this ſide of the Baltic. Theſe treaties. and the immenſe credit and influence that France had acquired by them in the empire, put it out of the power of one branch of the houſe of Auſtria to return the obligations of aſſiſtance to the other, in the war that continued between France and Spain, till the Pyrenean treaty. By this treaty the ſuperiority of the houſe of Bourbon over the houſe of Auſtria was not only completed and confirmed, but the great deſign of uniting the Spanish and the French monarchies under the former was laid.

THE third period therefore begins by a great change of the balance of power in Europe, and by the proſpect of one much greater and more fatal. Before I deſcend into the particulars I intend to mention, of the courſe of affairs, and of the political conduct of the great powers of Europe in this third period; give me leave to caſt my eyes once more back on the ſecond. The reflection I am going to make ſeems to me important, and leads to all that is to follow.

THE Dutch made their peace ſeparately at Munſter with Spain, who acknowledged then the ſovereignty and independency of their common-

wealth. The French, who had been, after our ELIZABETH, their principal ſupport, reproached them ſeverely for this breach of faith. They excuſed themſelves in the beſt manner, and by the beſt reaſons, they could. All this your lordship will find in the monuments of that time. But I think it not improbable that they had a motive you will not find there, and which it was not proper to give as a reaſon or excuſe to the French. Might not the wiſe men amongſt them conſider even then, beſides the immediate advantages that accrued by this treaty to their commonwealth, that the imperial power was fallen; that the power of Spain was vaſtly reduced; that the houſe of Auſtria was nothing more than the shadow of a great name, and that the houſe of Bourbon was advancing, by large ſtrides, to a degree of power as exorbitant, and as formidable as that of the other family had been in the hands of CHARLES the fifth, of PHILIP the ſecond, and lately of the two FERDINANDS? Might they not foreſee, even then, what happened in the courſe of very few years, when they were obliged, for their own ſecurity, to aſſiſt their old enemies the Spaniards againſt their old friends the French? I think they might. Our CHARLES the firſt was no great politician, and yet he ſeemed to diſcern that the balance of power was turning in favor of France, ſome years before the treaties of Weſtphalia. He refuſed to be neuter, and threatened to take part with Spain, if the French purſued the deſign of beſieging Dunkirk and Graveline, according

to a concert taken between them and the Dutch, and in purſuance of a treaty for dividing the Spaniſh Low Countries, which RICHELIEU had negociated. CROMWELL either did not diſcern this turn of the balance of power, long afterwards when it was much more viſible; or, diſcerning it, he was induced by reaſons of private intereſt to act againſt the general intereſt of Europe. CROMWELL joined with France againſt Spain, and though he got Jamaica and Dunkirk, he drove the Spaniards into a neceſſity of making a peace with France, that has diſturbed the peace of the world almoſt fourſcore years, and the conſequences of which have well-nigh beggared in our times the nation he enſlaved in his. There is a tradition, I have heard it from perſons who lived in thoſe days, and I believe it came from THURLOE, that CROMWELL was in treaty with Spain, and ready to turn his arms againſt France when he died. If this fact was certain, as little as I honor his memory, I ſhould have ſome regret that he died ſo ſoon. But whatever his intentions were, we muſt charge the Pyrenean treaty, and the fatal conſequences of it, in great meaſure to his account. The Spaniards abhorred the thought of marrying their Infanta to LEWIS the fourteenth. It was on this point that they broke the negociation LIONNE had begun: and your lordſhip will perceive, that if they reſumed it afterwards, and offered the marriage they had before rejected, CROMWELL's league with France was a principal inducement to this alteration of their reſolutions.

THE

THE preciſe point at which the ſcales of power turn like that of the ſolſtice in either tropic, is imperceptible to common obſervation: and, in one caſe as in the other, ſome progreſs muſt be made in the new direction, before the change is perceived. They who are in the ſinking ſcale, for in the political balance of power, unlike to all others, the ſcale that is empty ſinks, and that which is full riſes; they who are in the ſinking ſcale, do not eaſily come off from the habitual prejudices of ſuperior wealth, or power, or skill, or courage, nor from the confidence that theſe prejudices inſpire. They who are in the riſing ſcale do not immediately feel their ſtrength, nor aſſume that confidence in it which ſucceſsful experience gives them afterwards. They who are the moſt concerned to watch the variations of this balance, miſjudge often in the ſame manner, and from the ſame prejudices. They continue to dread a power no longer able to hurt them, or they continue to have no apprehenſions of a power that grows daily more formidable. Spain verified the firſt obſervation at the end of the ſecond period, when, proud and poor, and enterpriſing and feeble, she ſtill thought herſelf a match for France. France verified the ſecond obſervation at the beginning of the third period, when the triple alliance ſtopped the progreſs of her arms, which alliances much more conſiderable were not able to effect afterwards. The other principal powers of Europe, in their turns, have verified the third obſervation

in both it's parts, through the whole courſe of this period.

WHEN LEWIS the fourteenth took the adminiſtration of affairs into his own hands, about the year one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty, he was in the prime of his age, and had, what princes ſeldom have, the advantages of youth and thoſe of experience together. Their education is generally bad; for which reaſon royal birth, that gives a right to the throne among other people, gave an abſolute excluſion from it among the Mammelukes. His was, in all reſpects, except one, as bad as that of other princes. He jeſted ſometimes on his own ignorance; and there were other defects in his character, owing to his education, which he did not ſee. But MAZARIN had initiated him betimes into the myſteries of his policy. He had ſeen a great part of thoſe foundations laid, on which he was to raiſe the fabric of his future grandeur: and as MAZARIN finiſhed the work that RICHELIEU began, he had the leſſons of one, and the examples of both, to inſtruct him. He had acquired habits of ſecrecy and method, in buſineſs; of reſerve, diſcretion, decency, and dignity, in behaviour. If he was not the greateſt king, he was the beſt actor of majeſty at leaſt, that ever filled a throne. He by no means wanted that courage which is commonly called bravery, though the want of it was imputed to him in the midſt of his greateſt triumphs: nor that other courage, leſs oſtentatious and more rarely found, calm, ſteady, perſevering reſolution: which ſeems to

ariſe leſs from the temper of the body, and is therefore called courage of the mind. He had them both moſt certainly, and I could produce unqueſtionable anecdotes in proof. He was, in one word, much ſuperior to any prince with whom he had to do, when he began to govern. He was ſurrounded with great captains bred in former wars, and with great miniſters bred in the ſame ſchool as himſelf. They who had worked under MAZARIN, worked on the ſame plan under him; and as they had the advantage of genius and experience over moſt of the miniſters of other countries, ſo they had another advantage over thoſe who were equal or ſuperior to them: the advantage of ſerving a maſter whoſe abſolute power was eſtabliſhed; and the advantage of a ſituation wherein they might exert their whole capacity without contradiction; over that, for inſtance, wherein your lordſhip's great grand-father was placed, at the ſame time, in England, and JOHN DE WIT in Holland. Among theſe miniſters, COLBERT muſt be mentioned particularly upon this occaſion; becauſe it was he who improved the wealth, and conſequently the power of France extremely, by the order he put into the finances, and by the encouragement he gave to trade and manufactures. The ſoil, the climate, the ſituation of France, the ingenuity, the induſtry, the vivacity of her inhabitants are ſuch; ſhe has ſo little want of the product of other countries, and other countries have ſo many real or imaginary wants to be ſupplied by her; that when ſhe is not at war with all her neighbours, when her

domeſtic quiet is preſerved and any tolerable adminiſtration of government prevails, she muſt grow rich at the expence of thoſe who trade, and even of thoſe who do not open a trade, with her. Her bawbles, her modes, the follies and extravagancies of her luxury, coſt England, about the time we are ſpeaking of, little leſs than eight hundred thouſand pounds ſterling a year, and other nations in their proportions. COLBERT made the moſt of all theſe advantageous circumſtances, and whilſt he filled the national ſpunge, he taught his ſucceſſors how to ſqueeze it; a ſecret that he repented having diſcovered, they ſay, when he ſaw the immenſe ſums that were neceſſary to ſupply the growing magnificence of his maſter.

THIS was the character of LEWIS the fourteenth, and this was the ſtate of his kingdom at the beginning of the preſent period. If his power was great, his pretenſions were ſtill greater. He had renounced, and, the Infanta with his conſent had renounced, all right to the ſucceſſion of Spain, in the ſtrongeſt terms that the precaution of the councils of Madrid could contrive. No matter; he conſented to theſe renunciations, but your lordship will find by the letters of MAZARIN, and by other memorials, that he acted on the contrary principle, from the firſt, which he avowed ſoon afterwards. Such a power, and ſuch pretenſions, should have given, one would think, an immediate alarm to the reſt of Europe. PHILIP the fourth was broken and decayed, like the monarchy he governed. One of his ſons died, as I remember, during the negociations that

preceded the year one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty: and the ſurvivor, who was CHARLES the ſecond, rather languiſhed, than lived, from the cradle to the grave. So dangerous a contingency, therefore, as the union of the two monarchies of France and Spain, being in view forty years together; one would imagine that the principal powers of Europe had the means of preventing it conſtantly in view during the ſame time. But it was otherwiſe. France acted very ſyſtematically from the year one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty, to the death of king CHARLES the ſecond of Spain. She never loſt ſight of her great object, the ſucceſſion to the whole Spaniſh monarchy; and ſhe accepted the will of the king of SPAIN in favor of the duke of ANJOU. As ſhe never loſt ſight of her great object during this time, ſo ſhe loſt no opportunity of increaſing her power, while ſhe waited for that of ſucceeding in her pretenſions. The two branches of Auſtria were in no condition of making a conſiderable oppoſition to her deſigns and attempts. Holland, who of all other powers was the moſt concerned to oppoſe them, was at that time under two influences that hindered her from purſuing her true Intereſt. Her true intereſt was to have uſed her utmoſt endeavours to unite cloſely and intimately with England on the reſtoration of king CHARLES. She did the very contrary. JOHN DE WIT, at the head of the Louveſtein faction, governed. The intereſt of his party was to keep the houſe of Orange down; he courted therefore the friendſhip of

France, and neglected that of England. The alliance between our nation and the Dutch was renewed, I think, in one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty two; but the latter had made a defenſive league with France a little before, on the ſuppoſition principally of a war with England. The war became inevitable very ſoon. CROMWELL had chaſtiſed them for their uſurpations in trade, and the outrages and cruelties they had committed; but he had not cured them. The ſame ſpirit continued in the Dutch, the ſame reſentments in the Engliſh: and the pique of merchants became the pique of nations. France entered into the war on the ſide of Holland; but the little aſſiſtance ſhe gave the Dutch ſhewed plainly enough that her intention was to make theſe two powers waſte their ſtrength againſt one another, whilſt ſhe extended her conqueſts in the Spaniſh Low Countries. Her invaſion of theſe provinces obliged DE WIT to change his conduct. Hitherto he had been attached to France in the cloſeſt manner, had led his republic to ſerve all the purpoſes of France, and had renewed with the marſhal D'ESTRADES a project of dividing the Spaniſh Netherlands between France and Holland, that had been taken up formerly, when RICHELIEU made uſe of it to flatter their ambition, and to engage them to prolong the war againſt Spain. A project not unlike to that which was held out to them by the famous preliminaries, and the extravagant barrier-treaty, in one thouſand ſeven hundred and nine; and which engaged them to continue a war on the principle

of ambition, into which they had entered with more reaſonable and more moderate views.

As the private intereſts of the two DE WITS hindered that common-wealth from being on her guard, as early as ſhe ought to have been, againſt France; ſo the miſtaken policy of the court of England, and the ſhort views, and the profuſe temper of the prince who governed, gave great advantages to LEWIS the fourteenth in the purſuit of his deſigns. He bought Dunkirk: and your lordſhip knows how great a clamor was raiſed on that occaſion againſt your noble anceſtor; as if he alone had been anſwerable for the meaſure, and his intereſt had been concerned in it. I have heard our late friend Mr. GEORGE CLARK quote a witneſs, who was quite unexceptionable, but I cannot recal his name at preſent, who, many years after all theſe tranſactions, and the death of my lord CLARENDON, affirmed, that the earl of SANDWICH had owned to him, that he himſelf gave his opinion, among many others, officers, and miniſters, for ſelling Dunkirk. Their reaſons could not be good, I preſume to ſay; but ſeveral, that might be plauſible at that time, are eaſily gueſſed. A prince like king CHARLES, who would have made as many bad bargains as any young ſpendthrift, for money, finding himſelf thus backed, we may aſſure ourſelves, was peremptorily determined to ſell: and whatever your great grand father's opinion was, this I am able to pronounce upon my own experience, that his treaty for the ſale is no proof he was of opinion to ſell. When the reſolution of

ſelling was once taken, to whom could the ſale be made? To the Dutch? No. This meaſure would have been at leaſt as impolitic, and, in that moment, perhaps more odious than the other. To the Spaniards? They were unable to buy: and, as low as their power was ſunk, the principle of oppoſing it ſtill prevailed. I have ſometimes thought that the Spaniards, who were forced to make peace with Portugal, and to renounce all claim to that crown, four or five years afterwards, might have been induced to take this reſolution then, if the regaining Dunkirk without any expence had been a condition propoſed to them; and that the Portugueſe, who, notwithſtanding their alliance with England and the indirect ſuccours that France afforded them, were little able, after the treaty eſpecially, to ſupport a war againſt Spain, might have been induced to pay the price of Dunkirk, for ſo great an advantage as immediate peace with Spain, and the extinction of all foreign pretences on their crown. But this ſpeculation concerning events ſo long ago paſſed is not much to the purpoſe here. I proceed therefore to obſerve, that notwithſtanding the ſale of Dunkirk, and the ſecret leanings of our court to that of France, yet England was firſt to take the alarm, when LEWIS the fourteenth invaded the Spaniſh Netherlands in one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty ſeven: and the triple alliance was the work of an Engliſh miniſter. It was time to take this alarm; for from the moment that the king of FRANCE claimed a right to the county of Burgundy, the

dutchy of Brabant, and other portions of the Low Countries as devolved on his queen by the death of her father PHILIP the fourth, he pulled off the mask entirely. Volumes were written to eſtabliſh, and to refute this ſuppoſed right. Your lordſhip no doubt will look into a controverſy that has employed ſo many pens and ſo many ſwords; and I believe you will think it was ſufficiently bold in the French, to argue from cuſtoms, that regulated the courſe of private ſucceſſions in certain provinces, to a right of ſucceeding to the ſovereignty of thoſe provinces; and to aſſert the diviſibility of the Spaniſh monarchy, with the ſame breath with which they aſſerted the indiviſibility of their own; although the proofs in one caſe were juſt as good as the proofs in the other, and the fundamental law of indiviſibility was at leaſt as good a law in Spain, as either this or the Salique law was in France. But however proper it might be for the French and Auſtrian pens to enter into long diſcuſſions, and to appeal, on this great occaſion, to the reſt of Europe; the reſt of Europe had a ſhort objection to make to the plea of France, which no ſophiſms, no quirks of law, could evade. Spain accepted the renunciations as a real ſecurity: France gave them as ſuch to Spain, and in effect to the reſt of Europe. If they had not been thus given, and thus taken, the Spaniards would not have married their Infanta to the king of FRANCE, whatever diſtreſs they might have endured by the prolongation of the war. Theſe renunciations were renunciations of all rights whatſoever to the whole Spaniſh monarchy,

and to every part of it. The provinces claimed by France at this time were parts of it. To claim them, was therefore to claim the whole; for if the renunciations were no bar to the rights accruing to MARY THERESA on the death of her father PHILIP the fourth, neither could they be any to the rights that would accrue to her and her children, on the death of her brother CHARLES the ſecond: an unhealthful youth, and who at this inſtant was in immediate danger of dying; for to all the complicated diſtempers he brought into the world with him, the ſmall-pox was added. Your lordship ſees how the fatal contingency of uniting the two monarchies of France and Spain ſtared mankind in the face; and yet nothing, that I can remember, was done to prevent it: not ſo much as a guaranty given, or a declaration made to aſſert the validity of theſe renunciations, and for ſecuring the effect of them. The triple alliance indeed ſtopped the progreſs of the French arms, and produced the treaty of Aix la Chapelle. But England, Sweden, and Holland, the contracting powers in this alliance, ſeemed to look, and probably did look, no farther. France kept a great and important part of what she had ſurprized or ravished, or purchaſed; for we cannot ſay with any propriety that she conquered: and the Spaniards were obliged to ſet all they ſaved to the account of gain. The German branch of Auſtria had been reduced very low in power and in credit under FERDINAND the third, by the treaties of Weſtphalia, as I have ſaid already. LEWIS the fourteenth maintained,

during many years, the influence theſe treaties had given him among the princes and ſtates of the empire. The famous capitulation made at Frankfort on the election of LEOPOLD, who ſucceeded FERDINAND about the year one thouſand ſix hundred and fifty ſeven, was encouraged by the intrigues of France: and the power of France was looked upon as the ſole power that could ratify and ſecure effectually the obſervation of the conditions then made. The league of the Rhine was not renewed I believe after the year one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty ſix; but though this league was not renewed, yet ſome of theſe princes and ſtates continued in their old engagement with France: whilſt others took new engagements on particular occaſions, according as private and ſometimes very paultry intereſts, and the emiſſaries of France in all their little courts, diſpoſed them. In ſhort the princes of Germany ſhewed no alarm at the growing ambition and power of LEWIS the fourteenth, but contributed to encourage one, and to confirm the other. In ſuch a ſtate of things the German branch was little able to aſſiſt the Spaniſh branch againſt France, either in the war that ended by the Pyrenean treaty, or in that we are ſpeaking of here, the ſhort war that began in one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty ſeven, and was ended by the treaty of Aix la Chapelle, in one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty eight. But it was not this alone that diſabled the emperor from acting with vigor in the cauſe of his family then, nor that has rendered the houſe of Auſtria a dead weight upon

all her allies ever ſince. Bigotry, and its inſeparable companion, cruelty, as well as the tyranny and avarice of the court of Vienna, created in thoſe days, and has maintained in ours, almoſt a perpetual diverſion of the imperial arms from all effectual oppoſition to France. I mean to ſpeak of the troubles in Hungary. Whatever they became in their progreſs, they were cauſed originally by the uſurpations and perſecutions of the emperor: and when the Hungarians were called rebels firſt, they were called ſo for no other reaſon than this, that they would not be slaves. The dominion of the emperor being leſs ſupportable than that of the Turks, this unhappy people opened a door to the latter to infeſt the empire, inſtead of making their country what it had been before, a barrier againſt the Ottoman power. France became a ſure, though ſecret ally of the Turks, as well as the Hungarians, and has found her account in it, by keeping the emperor in perpetual alarms on that ſide, while she has ravaged the empire and the Low Countries on the other. Thus we ſaw, thirty two years ago, the arms of France and Bavaria in poſſeſſion of Paſſau, and the malcontents of Hungary in the ſuburbs of Vienna. In a word, when LEWIS the fourteenth made the firſt eſſay of his power, by the war of one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty ſeven, and founded, as it were, the councils of Europe concerning his pretenſions on the Spaniſh ſucceſſion, he found his power to be great beyond what his neighbours or even he perhaps thought it: great by the wealth, and greater

by the united ſpirit of his people; greater ſtill by the ill policy, and divided intereſts that governed thoſe who had a ſuperior common intereſt to oppoſe him. He found that the members of the triple alliance did not ſee, or ſeeing did not think proper to own that they ſaw, the injuſtice, and the conſequence of his pretenſions. They contented themſelves to give to Spain an act of guaranty for ſecuring the execution of the treaty of Aix la Chapelle. He knew even then how ill the guaranty would be obſerved by two of them at leaſt, by England and by Sweden. The treaty itſelf was nothing more than a compoſition between the bully and the bullied. Tournay, and Liſle, and Douay, and other places that I have forgot, were yielded to him: and he reſtored the county of Burgundy, according to the option that Spain made, againſt the intereſt and expectation too of the Dutch, when an option was forced upon her. The king of SPAIN compounded for his poſſeſſion: but the emperor compounded at the ſame time for his ſucceſſion, by a private eventual treaty of partition, which the commander of GREMONVILLE and the count of AVERSBERG ſigned at Vienna. The ſame LEOPOLD, who exclaimed ſo loudly, in one thouſand ſix hundred and ninety eight, againſt any partition of the Spaniſh monarchy, and refuſed to ſubmit to that which England and Holland had then made, made one himſelf in one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty eight, with ſo little regard to theſe two powers, that the whole ten provinces were thrown into the lot of France.

THERE is no room to wonder if ſuch experience as LEWIS the fourteenth had upon this occaſion, and ſuch a face of affairs in Europe, raiſing his hopes, raiſed his ambition: and if, in making peace at Aix la Chapelle, he meditated a new war, the war of one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy two; the preparations he made for it, by negotiations in all parts, by alliances wherever he found ingreſſion, and by the increaſe of his forces, were equally proofs of ability, induſtry, and power. I ſhall not deſcend into theſe particulars: your lordship will find them pretty well detailed in the memorials of that time. But one of the alliances he made I muſt mention, though I mention it with the utmoſt regret and indignation. England was fatally engaged to act a part in this conſpiracy againſt the peace and the liberty of Europe, nay, againſt her own peace and her own liberty; for a bubble's part it was, equally wicked and impolitic. Forgive the terms I uſe, my lord, none can be too ſtrong. The principles of the triple alliance, juſt and wiſe, and worthy of a king of England, were laid aſide. Then, the progreſs of the French arms was to be checked, the ten provinces were to be ſaved, and by ſaving them the barrier of Holland was to be preſerved. Now, we joined our counſels and our arms to thoſe of France, in a project that could not be carried on at all, as it was eaſy to foreſee, and as the event ſhewed, unleſs it was carried on againſt Spain, the emperor, and moſt of the princes of Germany, as well as the Dutch; and

which could not be carried on ſucceſsfully, without leaving the ten provinces entirely at the mercy of France and giving her pretence and opportunity of ravaging the empire, and extending her conqueſts on the Rhine. The medal of VAN BEUNINGHEN, and other pretences that France took for attacking the ſtates of the Low Countries were ridiculous. They impoſed on no one: and the true object of LEWIS the fourteenth was manifeſt to all. But what could a king of England mean? CHARLES the ſecond had reaſons of reſentment againſt the Dutch, and juſt ones too no doubt. Among the reſt, it was not eaſy for him to forget the affront he had ſuffered, and the loſs he had ſuſtained, when, depending on the peace that was ready to be ſigned, and that was ſigned at Breda in July, he neglected to fit out his fleet; and when that of Holland, commanded by RUYTER, with CORNELIUS DE WIT on board as deputy or commiſſioner of the ſtates, burnt his ships at Chatham in June. The famous perpetual edict, as it was called but did not prove in the event, againſt the election of a ſtate-holder, which JOHN DE WIT promoted, carried, and obliged the prince of ORANGE to ſwear to maintain a very few days after the concluſion of the peace at Breda, might be another motive in the breaſt of king CHARLES the ſecond: as it was certainly a pretence of revenge on the Dutch, or at leaſt on the DE WITS and the Louveſtein faction, that ruled almoſt deſpotically in that commonwealth. But it is plain that neither theſe reaſons, nor

others of a more ancient date, determined him to this alliance with France; ſince he contracted the triple alliance within four or five months after the two events I have mentioned, happened. What then did he mean? Did he mean to acquire one of the ſeven provinces, and divide them, as the Dutch had twice treated for the diviſion of the ten, with France? I believe not; but this I believe, that his inclinations were favourable to the popiſh intereſt in general, and that he meant to make himſelf more abſolute at home; that he thought it neceſſary to this end to humble the Dutch, to reduce their power, and perhaps to change the form of their government: to deprive his ſubjects of the correſpondence with a neighbouring proteſtant and free ſtate, and of all hope of ſuccour and ſupport from thence in their oppoſition to him; in a word to abet the deſigns of France on the continent, that France might abet his deſigns on his own kingdom. This, I ſay, I believe; and this I ſhould venture to affirm, if I had in my hands to produce, and was at liberty to quote, the private relations I have read formerly, drawn up by thoſe who were no enemies to ſuch deſigns, and on the authority of thoſe who were parties to them. But whatever king CHARLES the ſecond meant, certain it is that his conduct eſtabliſhed the ſuperiority of France in Europe.

BUT this charge, however, muſt not be confined to him alone. Thoſe who were nearer the danger, thoſe who were expoſed to the immediate attacks

of

of France, and even thoſe who were her rivals for the ſame ſucceſſion; having either aſſiſted her, or engaged to remain neuters, a ſtrange fatality prevailed, and produced ſuch a conjuncture as can hardly be paralleled in hiſtory. Your lordship will obſerve with aſtonishment even in the beginning of the year one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy two, all the neighbours of France acting as if they had nothing to fear from her, and ſome as if they had much to hope, by helping her to oppreſs the Dutch and sharing with her the ſpoils of that commonwealth. "Delenda eſt „ Carthago," was the cry in England, and ſeemed too a maxim on the continent.

IN the courſe of the ſame year, you will obſerve that all theſe powers took the alarm, and began to unite in oppoſition to France. Even England thought it time to interpoſe in favor of the Dutch. The conſequences of this alarm, of this ſudden turn in the policy of Europe, and of that which happened by the maſſacre of the DE WITS, and the elevation of the prince of ORANGE, in the government of the ſeven provinces, ſaved theſe provinces, and ſtopped the rapid progreſs of the arms of France. LEWIS the fourteenth indeed ſurpriſed the ſeven provinces in this war, as he had ſurpriſed the ten in that of one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty ſeven, and ravaged defenceleſs countries with armies ſufficient to conquer them, if they had been prepared to reſiſt. In the war of one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy two, he had little leſs than one hundred and fifty thouſand

men on foot, beſides the bodies of English, Swiſs, Italians, and Swedes, that amounted to thirty or forty thouſand more. With this mighty force he took forty places in forty days, impoſed extravagant conditions of peace, play[illegible] the monarch a little while at Utrecht; and as ſoon as the Dutch recovered from their conſternation, and, animated by the example of the prince of Orange and the hopes of ſuccour, refuſed theſe conditions, he went back to Verſailles, and left his generals to carry on his enterprize: which they did with ſo little ſucceſs, that Grave and Maeſtricht alone remained to him of all the boaſted conqueſts he had made; and even theſe he offered two years afterwards to reſtore, if by that conceſſion he could have prevailed on the Dutch at that time to make peace with him. But they were not yet diſpoſed to abandon their allies; for allies now they had. The emperor and the king of SPAIN had engaged in the quarrel againſt France, and many of the princes of the empire had done the ſame; not all. The Bavarian continued obſtinate in his neutrality, and to mention no more, the Swedes made a great diverſion in favor of France in the empire; where the duke of HANOVER abetted their deſigns as much as he could, for he was a zealous partiſan of France, though the other princes of his houſe acted for the common cauſe. I deſcend into no more particulars. The war that LEWIS the fourteenth kindled by attacking in ſo violent a manner the Dutch commonwealth, and by making ſo arbitrary an uſe of his firſt ſucceſs, became general, in the Low Countries, in Spain, in Sicily,

on the upper and lower Rhine, in Denmark, in Sweden, and in the provinces of Germany belonging to theſe two crowns; on the Mediterranean, the Ocean, and the Baltic. France ſupported this war with advantage on every ſide: and when your lordſhip conſiders in what manner it was carried on againſt her, you will not be ſurpriſed that she did ſo. Spain had ſpirit, but too little ſtrength to maintain her power in Sicily, where Meſſina had revolted; to defend her frontier on that ſide of the Pyrenees; and to reſiſt the great efforts of the French in the Low Countries. The empire was divided; and, even among the princes who acted againſt France, there was neither union in their councils, nor concert in their projects, nor order in preparations, nor vigor in execution: and, to ſay the truth, there was not, in the whole confederacy, a man whoſe abilities could make him a match for the prince of CONDE or the marshal of TURENNE; nor many who were in any degree equal to LUXEMBURG, CREQUI, SCHOMBERG, and other generals of inferior note, who commanded the armies of France. The emperor took this very time to make new invaſions on the liberties of Hungary, and to oppreſs his proteſtant ſubjects. The prince of ORANGE alone acted with invincible firmneſs, like a patriot, and a hero. Neither the ſeductions of France nor thoſe of England, neither the temptations of ambition nor thoſe of private intereſt could make him ſwerve from the true intereſt of his country, nor from the common intereſt of Europe. He had raiſed more ſieges,

and loſt more battles, it was ſaid, than any general of his age had done. Be it ſo. But his defeats were manifeſtly due in great meaſure to circumſtances independent on him: and that ſpirit, which even theſe defeats could not depreſs, was all his own. He had difficulties in his own commonwealth; the governors of the Spaniſh Low Countries croſſed his meaſures ſometimes: the German allies diſappointed and broke them often: and it is not improbable that he was frequently betrayed. He was ſo perhaps even by SOUCHES, the imperial general: a Frenchman according to BAYLE, and a penſioner of Louvois according to common report, and very ſtrong appearances. He had not yet credit and authority ſufficient to make him a centre of union to a whole confederacy, the ſoul that animated and directed ſo great a body. He came to be ſuch afterwards; but at the time ſpoken of he could not take ſo great a part upon him. No other prince or general was equal to it: and the conſequences of this defect appeared almoſt in every operation. France was ſurrounded by a multitude of enemies, all intent to demoliſh her power. But, like the builders of Babel, they ſpoke different languages: and as thoſe could not build, theſe could not demoliſh, for want of underſtanding one another. France improved this advantage by her arms, and more by her negotiations. Nimeghen was, after Cologn, the ſcene of theſe. England was the mediating power, and I know not whether our CHARLES the ſecond did not ſerve her purpoſes more uſefully in the latter, and

under the character of mediator, than he did or could have done by joining his arms to her's, and acting as her ally. The Dutch were induced to ſign a treaty with him, that broke the confederacy, and gave great advantage to France: for the purport of it was to oblige France and Spain to make peace on a plan to be propoſed to them, and no mention was made in it of the other allies that I remember. The Dutch were glad to get out of an expenſive war. France promiſed to reſtore Maeſtricht to them, and Maeſtricht was the only place that remained unrecovered of all they had loſt. They dropped Spain at Nimeghen, as they had dropped France at Munſter, but many circumſtances concurred to give a much worſe grace to their abandoning of Spain, than to their abandoning of France. I need not ſpecify them. This only I would obſerve: when they made a ſeparate peace at Munſter, they left an ally who was in condition to carry on the war alone with advantage, and they preſumed to impoſe no terms upon him: when they made a ſeparate peace at Nimeghen, they abandoned an ally who was in no condition to carry on the war alone, and who was reduced to accept whatever terms the common enemy preſcribed. In their great diſtreſs in one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy three, they engaged to reſtore Maeſtricht to the Spaniards as ſoon as it ſhould be retaken: it was not retaken, and they accepted it for themſelves as the price of the ſeparate peace they made with France. The Dutch had engaged farther, to make neither peace

nor truce with the king of FRANCE, till that prince conſented to reſtore to Spain all he had conquered ſince the Pyrenean treaty. But, far from keeping this promiſe in any tolerable degree, LEWIS the fourteenth acquired, by the plan impoſed on Spain at Nimeghen, beſides the county of Burgundy, ſo many other countries and towns on the ſide of the ten Spaniſh provinces, that theſe, added to the places he kept of thoſe which had been yielded to him by the treaty of Aix la Chapelle (for ſome of little conſequence he reſtored) put into his hands the principal ſtrength of that barrier, againſt which we goaded ourſelves almoſt to death in the laſt great war; and made good the ſaying of the marſhal of SCHOMBERG, that to attack this barrier was to take the beaſt by his horns. I know very well what may be ſaid to excuſe the Dutch. The emperor was more intent to tyrannize his ſubjects on one ſide, than to defend them on the other. He attempted little againſt France, and the little he did attempt was ill ordered, and worſe executed. The aſſiſtance of the princes of Germany was often uncertain, and always expenſive. Spain was already indebted to Holland for great ſums; greater ſtill muſt be advanced to her if the war continued: and experience ſhewed that France was able, and would continue, to prevail againſt her preſent enemies. The triple league had ſtopped her progreſs, and obliged her to abandon the county of Burgundy; but Sweden was now engaged in the war on the ſide of France, as England had been in the

beginning of it: and England was now privately favorable to her intereſts, as Sweden had been in the beginning of it. The whole ten provinces would have been ſubdued in the courſe of a few campaigns more: and it was better for Spain and the Dutch too, that part ſhould be ſaved by accepting a ſort of compoſition, than the whole be riſqued by refuſing it. This might be alledged to excuſe the conduct of the States General, in impoſing hard terms on Spain; in making none for their other allies, and in ſigning alone: by which ſteps they gave France an opportunity that she improved with great dexterity of management, the opportunity of treating with the confederates one by one, and of beating them by detail in the cabinet, if I may ſo ſay, as she had often done in the field. I ſhall not compare theſe reaſons, which were but too well founded in fact, and muſt appear plauſible at leaſt, with other conſiderations that might be, and were at the time, inſiſted upon. I confine myſelf to a few obſervations, which every knowing and impartial man muſt admit. Your lordship will obſerve, firſt, that the fatal principle of compounding with LEWIS the fourteenth, from the time that his pretenſions, his power, and the uſe he made of it, began to threaten Europe, prevailed ſtill more at Nimeghen than it had prevailed at Aix: ſo that although he did not obtain to the full all he attempted, yet the dominions of France were by common conſent, on every treaty, more and more extended; her barriers on all ſides were more and more ſtrengthened;

thoſe of her neighbours were more and more weakened; and that power, which was to aſſert one day, againſt the reſt of Europe, the pretended rights of the houſe of Bourbon to the Spaniſh monarchy, was more and more eſtabliſhed, and rendered truly formidable in ſuch hands at leaſt, during the courſe of the firſt eighteen years of the period. Your lordſhip will pleaſe to obſerve, in the ſecond place, that the extreme weakneſs of one branch of Auſtria, and the miſerable conduct of both; the poverty of ſome of the princes of the empire, and the diſunion, and, to ſpeak plainly, the mercenary policy of all of them; in ſhort, the confined views, the falſe notions, and, to ſpeak as plainly of my own as of other nations, the iniquity of the councils of England, not only hindered the growth of this power from being ſtopped in time, but nurſed it up into ſtrength almoſt inſuperable by any future confederacy. A third obſervation is this: If the excuſes made for the conduct of the Dutch at Nimeghen are not ſufficient, they too muſt come in for their ſhare in this condemnation, even after the death of the DE WITS; as they were to be condemned moſt juſtly, during that adminiſtration, for abetting and favoring France. If theſe excuſes, grounded on their inability to purſue any longer a war, the principal profit of which was to accrue to their confederates, for that was the caſe after the year one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy three, or one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy four, and the principal burden of which was thrown on them

by their confederates; if theſe are ſufficient, they ſhould not have acted for decency's ſake as well as out of good policy, the part they did act in one thouſand ſeven hundred and eleven and one thouſand ſeven hundred and twelve, towards the late queen, who had complaints of the ſame kind, in a much higher degree and with circumſtances much more aggravating, to make of them, of the emperor, and of all the princes of Germany; and who was far from treating them and their other allies, at that time, as they treated Spain and their other allies in one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy eight. Immediately after the Dutch had made their peace, that of Spain was ſigned with France. The emperor's treaty with this crown and that of Sweden was concluded in the following year: and LEWIS the fourteenth being now at liberty to aſſiſt his ally, whilſt he had tied up the powers with whom he had treated from aſſiſting theirs, he ſoon forced the king of DENMARK and the elector of BRANDENBURG to reſtore all they had taken from the Swedes, and to conclude the peace of the north. In all theſe treaties he gave the law, and he was now at the higheſt point of his grandeur. He continued at this point for ſeveral years, and in this heighth of his power he prepared thoſe alliances againſt it, under the weight of which he was at laſt well-nigh oppreſſed; and might have been reduced as low as the general intereſt of Europe required, if ſome of the cauſes, which worked now, had not continued to work in his favor, and if his enemies had not proved, in their

turn of fortune, as inſatiable as proſperity had rendered him.

AFTER he had made peace with all the powers with whom he had been in war, he continued to vex both Spain and the empire, and to extend his conqueſts in the Low Countries, and on the Rhine, both by the pen and the ſword. He erected the chambers of Metz and of Briſach, where his own ſubjects were proſecutors, witneſſes, and judges all at once. Upon the deciſions of theſe tribunals, he ſeized into his own hands, under the notions of dependencies and the pretence of reunions, whatever towns or diſtricts of country tempted his ambition, or ſuited his conveniency: and added, by theſe and by other means, in the midſt of peace, more territories to thoſe the late treaties had yielded to him, than he could have got by continuing the war. He acted afterwards, in the ſupport of all this, without any bounds or limits. His glory was a reaſon for attacking Holland in one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy two, and his conveniency a reaſon for many of the attacks he made on others afterwards. He took Luxemburg by force: he ſtole Strasburg; he bought Caſſal: and, whilſt he waited the opportunity of acquiring to his family the crown of Spain, he was not without thoughts, nor hopes perhaps, of bringing into it the imperial crown likewiſe. Some of the cruelties he exerciſed in the empire may be aſcribed to his diſappointment in this view: I ſay ſome of them, becauſe in the war that ended by the treaty of Nimeghen,

he had already exerciſed many. Though the French writers endeavour to slide over them, to palliate them, and to impute them particularly to the English that were in their ſervice, for even this one of their writers has the front to advance: yet theſe cruelties unheard of among civilized nations, muſt be granted to have been ordered by the counſels, and executed by the arms of France, in the Palatinate, and in other parts.

IF LEWIS the fourteenth could have contented himſelf with the acquiſitions that were confirmed to him by the treaties of one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy eight, and one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy nine, and with the authority and reputation which he then gained; it is plain that he would have prevented the alliances that were afterwards formed againſt him, and that he might have regained his credit amongſt the princes of the empire, where he had one family-alliance by the marriage of his brother to the daughter of the elector Palatine, and another by that of his ſon to the ſiſter of the elector of BAVARIA; where Sweden was cloſely attached to him, and where the ſame principles of private intereſt would have ſoon attached others as cloſely. He might have remained not only the principal, but the directing power of Europe, and have held this rank with all the glory imaginable, till the death of the king of SPAIN, or ſome other object of great ambition, had determined him to act another part. But, inſtead of this, he continued to vex and provoke all thoſe who were, unhappily for

them, his neighbours, and that, in many inſtances, for trifles. An example of this kind occurs to me. On the death of the duke of DEUX PONTS, he ſeized that little inconſiderable dutchy, without any regard to the indiſputable right of the king of SWEDEN, to the ſervices that crown had rendered him, or to the want he might have of that alliance hereafter. The conſequence was, that Sweden entered, with the emperor, the king of SPAIN, the elector of Bavaria, and the States General, into the alliance of guaranty, as it was called, about the year one thouſand ſix hundred and eighty three, and into the famous league of Augsburg, in one thouſand ſix hundred and eighty ſix.

SINCE I have mentioned this league, and ſince we may date from it a more general and a more concerted oppoſition to France than there had been before; give me leave to recal ſome of the reflections that have preſented themſelves to my mind, in conſidering what I have read, and what I have heard related, concerning the paſſages of that time. They will be of uſe to form our judgment concerning later paſſages. If the king of FRANCE became an object of averſion on account of any invaſions he made, any deviations from public faith, any barbarities exerciſed where his arms prevailed, or the perſecution of his proteſtant ſubjects; the emperor deſerved to be ſuch an object, at leaſt as much as he, on the ſame accounts. The emperor was ſo too, but with this difference relatively to the political

ſyſtem of the weſt: the Auſtrian ambition and bigotry exerted themſelves in diſtant countries, whoſe intereſts were not conſidered as a part of this ſyſtem; for, otherwiſe there would have been as much reaſon for aſſiſting the people of Hungary and of Tranſylvania againſt the emperor, as there had been formerly for aſſiſting the people of the ſeven united provinces againſt Spain, or as there have been lately for aſſiſting them againſt France: but the ambition and bigotry of LEWIS the fourteenth were exerted in the Low Countries, on the Rhine, in Italy, and in Spain, in the very midſt of this ſyſtem, if I may ſay ſo, and with ſucceſs that could not fail to ſubvert it in time. The power of the houſe of Auſtria, that had been feared too long, was feared no longer: and that of the houſe of Bourbon, by having been feared too late, was now grown terrible. The emperor was ſo intent on the eſtabliſhment of his abſolute power in Hungary, that he expoſed the empire doubly to deſolation and ruin for the ſake of it. He left the frontier almoſt quite defenceleſs on the ſide of the Rhine, againſt the inroads and ravages of France: and by ſhewing no mercy to the Hungarians, nor keeping any faith with them, he forced that miſerable people into alliances with the Turk, who invaded the empire and beſieged Vienna. Even this event had no effect upon him. Your lordſhip will find, that SOBIESKI king of Poland, who had forced the Turks to raiſe the ſiege, and had fixed the imperial crown that tottered on his head, could not prevail on him

to take thoſe meaſures by which alone it was poſſible to cover the empire, to ſecure the King of SPAIN, and to reduce that power which was probably one day to diſpute with him this prince's ſucceſſion. TEKELI and the malcontents made ſuch demands as none but a tyrant could refuſe, the preſervation of their ancient privileges, liberty of conſcience, the convocation of a free diet or parliament, and others of leſs importance. All was in vain. The war continued with them, and with the Turks, and France was left at liberty to puſh her enterpriſes almoſt without oppoſition, againſt Germany and the Low Countries. The diſtreſs in both was ſo great, that the States General ſaw no other expedient for ſtopping the progreſs of the French arms, than a ceſſation of hoſtilities, or a truce of twenty years; which they negotiated, and which was accepted by the emperor and the king of SPAIN, on the terms that LEWIS the fourteenth thought fit to offer. By theſe terms he was to remain in full and quiet poſſeſſion of all he had acquired ſince the years one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy eight, and one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy nine; among which acquiſitions that of Luxemburg and that of Strasburg were comprehended. The conditions of this truce were ſo advantageous to France, that all her intrigues were employed to obtain a definitive treaty of peace upon the ſame conditions. But this was neither the intereſt nor the intention of the other contracting powers. The imperial arms had been

very ſucceſsful againſt the Turks. This ſucceſs, as well as the troubles that followed upon it in the Ottoman armies, and at the Porte, gave a reaſonable expectation of concluding a peace on that ſide: and, this peace concluded, the emperor, and the empire, and the king of SPAIN would have been in a much better poſture to treat with France. With theſe views, that were wiſe and juſt, the league of Augsburg was made between the emperor, the kings of SPAIN and SWEDEN as princes of the empire, and the other circles and princes. This league was purely defenſive. An expreſs article declared it to be ſo: and as it had no other regard, it was not only conformable to the laws and conſtitutions of the empire, and to the practice of all nations, but even to the terms of the act of truce ſo lately concluded. This pretence therefore for breaking the truce, ſeizing the electorate of Cologn, invading the Palatinate, beſieging Philipsburg, and carrying unexpected and undeclared war into the empire, could not be ſupported: nor is it poſſible to read the reaſons published by France at this time, and drawn from her fears of the imperial power, without laughter. As little pretence was there to complain, that the emperor refuſed to convert at once the truce into a definitive treaty; ſince, if he had done ſo, he would have confirmed in a lump, and without any diſcuſſion, all the arbitrary decrees of thoſe chambers, or courts, that France had erected to cover her uſurpations; and would have given up almoſt a ſixth part of the provinces of the empire, that France

one way or other had poſſeſſed herſelf of. The pretenſions of the Dutcheſs of ORLEANS on the ſucceſſion of her father, and her brother, which were diſputed by the then elector Palatine, and were to be determined by the laws and cuſtoms of the empire, afforded as little pretence for beginning this war, as any of the former allegations. The excluſion of the cardinal of FURSTENBERG, who had been elected to the archbishoprick of Cologn, was capable of being aggravated: but even in this caſe his moſt chriſtian majeſty oppoſed his judgment and his authority againſt the judgment and authority of that holy father, whoſe eldeſt ſon he was proud to be called. In ſhort, the true reaſon why LEWIS the fourteenth began that cruel war with the empire, two years after he had concluded a ceſſation of hoſtilities for twenty, was this: he reſolved to keep what he had got; and therefore he reſolved to encourage the Turks to continue the war. He did this effectually, by invading Germany at the very inſtant when the Sultan was ſuing for peace. Notwithſtanding this, the Turks were in treaty again the following year: and good policy ſhould have obliged the emperor, ſince he could not hope to carry on this war and that againſt France, at the ſame time, with vigor and effect, to conclude a peace with the leaſt dangerous enemy of the two. The deciſion of this diſpute with France could not be deferred, his deſigns againſt the Hungarians were in part accomplished, for his ſon was declared king, and the ſettlement of that crown in his family was made;

made; and the reſt of theſe, as well as thoſe that he formed againſt the Turks, might be deferred. But the councils of Vienna judged differently, and inſiſted even at this critical moment on the moſt exorbitant terms; on ſome of ſuch a nature, that the Turks shewed more humanity and a better ſenſe of religion in refuſing, than they in asking them. Thus the war went on in Hungary, and proved a conſtant diverſion in favor of France, during the whole courſe of that which LEWIS the fourteenth began at this time: for the treaty of Carlowitz was poſterior to that of Ryſwic. The Empire, Spain, England, and Holland engaged in the war with France and on them the emperor left the burden of it. In the short war of one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty ſeven, he was not ſo much as a party, and inſtead of aſſiſting the king of SPAIN, which, it muſt be owned, he was in no good condition of doing, he bargained for dividing that prince's ſucceſſion, as I have obſerved above. In the war of one thouſand ſix hundred and ſeventy two he made ſome feeble efforts. In this of one thouſand ſix hundred and eighty eight he did ſtill leſs: and in the war which broke out at the beginning of the preſent century he did nothing, at leaſt after the firſt campaign in Italy, and after the engagements that England and Holland took by the grand alliance. In a word, from the time that an oppoſition to France became a common cauſe in Europe, the houſe of Auſtria has been a clog upon it in many inſtances, and of conſiderable aſſiſtance to it in none. The acceſſion of England

to this cauſe, which was brought about by the revolution of one thouſand ſix hundred and eighty eight, might have made amends, and more than amends, one would think, for this defect, and have thrown ſuperiority of power and of ſucceſs on the ſide of the confederates, with whom she took part againſt France. This, I ſay, might be imagined, without over-rating the power of England, or undervaluing that of France; and it was imagined at that time. How it proved otherwiſe in the event; how France came triumphant out of the war that ended by the treaty of Ryſwic, and though she gave up a great deal, yet preſerved the greateſt and the beſt part of her conqueſts and acquiſitions made ſince the treaties of Weſtphalia, and the Pyrenees; how she acquired, by the gift of Spain, that whole monarchy for one of her princes, though she had no reaſon to expect the leaſt part of it without a war at one time, nor the great lot of it even by a war at any time; in short, how she wound up advantageously the ambitious ſyſtem she had been fifty years in weaving; how she concluded a war, in which she was defeated on every ſide, and wholly exhauſted, with little diminution of the provinces and barriers acquired to France, and with the quiet poſſeſſion of Spain and the Indies to a prince of the houſe of Bourbon: all this, my lord, will be the ſubject of your reſearches, when you come down to the latter part of the laſt period of modern hiſtory.

LETTER VIII.

The ſame ſubject continued from the year one thouſand ſix hundred and eighty-eight.

YOUR lordship will find, that the objects propoſed by the alliance of one thouſand ſix hundred and eighty nine between the emperor and the States, to which England acceded, and which was the foundation of the whole confederacy then formed, were no leſs than to reſtore all things to the terms of the Weſtphalian and Pyrenean treaties, by the war; and to preſerve them in that ſtate, after the war, by a defenſive alliance and guaranty of the ſame confederate powers againſt France. The particular as well as general meaning of this engagement was plain enough: and if it had not been ſo, the ſenſe of it would have been ſufficiently determined, by that ſeparate article, in which England and Holland obliged themſelves to aſſiſt the " houſe of Auſtria, in taking and keeping „ poſſeſſion of the Spaniſh monarchy, whenever „ the caſe ſhould happen of the death of CHARLES „ the ſecond, without lawful heirs. " This engagement was double, and thereby relative to the whole political ſyſtem of Europe, alike affected by the power and pretenſions of France. Hitherto the

power of France had been alone regarded, and her pretenſions ſeemed to have been forgot: or to what purpoſe ſhould they have been remembered, whilſt Europe was ſo unhappily conſtituted, that the ſtates, at whoſe expence she increaſed her power, and their friends and allies, thought that they did enough upon every occaſion if they made ſome tolerable compoſition with her? They who were not in circumſtances to refuſe confirming preſent, were little likely to take effectual meaſures againſt future uſurpations. But now, as the alarm was greater than ever, by the outrages that France had committed; and the intrigues she had carried on; by the little regard she had shewn to public faith, and by the airs of authority she had aſſumed twenty years together: ſo was the ſpirit againſt her raiſed to an higher pitch, and the means of reducing her power, or at leaſt of checking it, were increaſed. The princes and ſtates who had neglected or favored the growth of this power, which all of them had done in their turns, ſaw their error; ſaw the neceſſity of repairing it, and ſaw that unleſs they could check the power of France, by uniting with a power ſuperior to her's, it would be impoſſible to hinder her from ſucceeding in her great deſigns on the Spanish ſucceſſion. The court of England had ſubmitted, not many years before, to abet her uſurpations, and the king of England had ſtooped to be her penſioner. But the crime was not national. On the contrary, the nation had cried out loudly againſt it, even whilſt it was committing: and as ſoon as ever the abdi-

cation of king JAMES, and the elevation of the prince of ORANGE to the throne of England happened, the nation engaged with all imaginable zeal in the common cauſe of Europe, to reduce the exorbitant power of France, to prevent her future and to revenge her paſt attempts; for even a ſpirit of revenge prevailed, and the war was a war of anger as well as of intereſt.

UNHAPPILY this zeal was neither well conducted, nor well ſeconded. It was zeal without ſucceſs in the firſt of the two wars that followed the year one thouſand ſix hundred and eighty-eight; and zeal without knowledge, in both of them. I enter into no detail concerning the events of theſe two wars. This only I obſerve on the firſt of them, that the treaties of Ryſwic were far from anſwering the ends propoſed and the engagements taken by the firſt grand alliance. The power of France, with reſpect to extent of dominions and ſtrength of barrier, was not reduced to the terms of the Pyrenean treaty, no nor to thoſe of the treaty of Nimeghen. Lorraine was reſtored indeed with very conſiderable reſerves, and the places taken or uſurped on the other ſide of the Rhine: but then Strasburg was yielded up abſolutely to France by the emperor, and by the empire. The conceſſions to Spain were great, but ſo were the conqueſts and the encroachments made upon her by France, ſince the treaty of Nimeghen: and she got little at Ryſwic, I believe nothing more than she had ſaved at Nimeghen before. All theſe conceſſions, however, as well as the acknowledgment of king

WILLIAM, and others made by LEWIS the fourteenth after he had taken Ath and Barcelona, even during the courſe of the negotiations, compared with the loſſes and repeated defeats of the allies and the ill ſtate of the confederacy, ſurpriſed the generality of mankind, who had not been accuſtomed to ſo much moderation and generoſity on the part of this prince. But the pretenſions of the houſe of Bourbon on the Spaniſh ſucceſſion remained the ſame. Nothing had been done to weaken them; nothing was prepared to oppoſe them: and the opening of this ſucceſſion was viſibly at hand: for CHARLES the ſecond had been in immediate danger of dying about this time. His death could not be a remote event: and all the good queen's endeavours to be got with child had proved ineffectual. The league diſſolved, all the forces of the confederates diſperſed, and many disbanded; France continuing armed, her forces by ſea and land increaſed and held in readineſs to act on all ſides, it was plain that the confederates had failed in the firſt object of the grand alliance, that of reducing the power of France; by ſucceeding in which alone they could have been able to keep the ſecond engagement, that of ſecuring the ſucceſſion of Spain to the houſe of Auſtria.

AFTER this peace, what remained to be done? In the whole nature of things there remained but three. To abandon all care of the Spaniſh ſucceſſion was one; to compound with France upon this ſucceſſion was another; and to prepare, like her, during the interval of peace, to make an

advantageous war whenever CHARLES the ſecond ſhould die, was a third. Now the firſt of theſe was to leave Spain, and, in leaving Spain, to leave all Europe in ſome ſort at the mercy of France; ſince whatever diſpoſition the Spaniards ſhould make of their crown, they were quite unable to ſupport it againſt France; ſince the emperor could do little without his alliance; and ſince Bavaria, the third pretender, could do ſtill leſs, and might find, in ſuch a caſe, his account perhaps better in treating with the houſe of Bourbon than with that of Auſtria. More needs not be ſaid on this head; but on the other two, which I ſhall conſider together, ſeveral facts are proper to be mentioned, and ſeveral reflections neceſſary to be made.

WE might have counter-worked, no doubt, in their own methods of policy,, the councils of France, who made peace to diſſolve the confederacy, and great conceſſions, with very ſuſpicious generoſity, to gain the Spaniards: we might have waited, like them, that is in arms, the death of CHARLES the ſecond, and have fortified in the mean time the diſpoſitions of the king, the court, and people of Spain, againſt the pretenſions of France: we might have made the peace, which was made ſome time after that, between the emperor and the Turks, and have obliged the former at any rate to have ſecured the peace of Hungary, and to have prepared, by theſe and other expedients, for the war that would inevitably break out on the death of the king of SPAIN.

BUT all ſuch meaſures were rendered impracticable, by the emperor chiefly. Experience had shewn, that the powers who engaged in alliance with him muſt expect to take the whole burden of his cauſe upon themſelves; and that Hungary would maintain a perpetual diverſion in favor of France, ſince he could not reſolve to lighten the tyrannical yoke he had eſtabliſhed in that country and in Tranſilvania, nor his miniſters to part with the immenſe confiſcations they had appropriated to themſelves. Paſt experience shewed this: and the experience that followed confirmed it very fatally. But further; there was not only little aſſiſtance to be expected from him by thoſe who should engage in his quarrel: he did them hurt of another kind, and deprived them of many advantages by falſe meaſures of policy and unskilful negotiations. Whilſt the death of CHARLES the ſecond was expected almoſt daily, the court of Vienna ſeemed to have forgot the court of Madrid, and all the pretenſions on that crown. When the count D'HARRACH was ſent thither, the imperial councils did ſomething worſe. The king of SPAIN was ready to declare the archduke CHARLES his ſucceſſor; he was deſirous to have this young prince ſent into Spain: the bent of the people was in favor of Auſtria, or it had been ſo, and might have been eaſily turned the ſame way again: at court no cabal was yet formed in favor of Bourbon, and a very weak intrigue was on foot in favor of the electoral prince of BAVARIA. Not only CHARLES might have been on the ſpot ready

to reap the ſucceſſion, but a German army might have been there to defend it; for the court of Madrid inſiſted on having twelve thouſand of theſe troops, and, rather than not to have them offered to contribute to the payment of them privately: becauſe it would have been too unpopular among the Spaniards, and too prejudicial to the Auſtrian intereſt, to have had it known that the emperor declined the payment of a body of his own troops that were demanded to ſecure that monarchy to his ſon. Theſe propoſals were half refuſed, and half evaded: and in return to the offer of the crown of Spain to the archduke, the imperial councils asked the government of Milan for him. They thought it a point of deep policy to ſecure the Italian provinces, and to leave to England and Holland the care of the Low countries, of Spain, and the Indies. By declining theſe propoſals the houſe of Auſtria renounced in ſome ſort the whole ſucceſſion: at leaſt she gave England and Holland reaſons, whatever engagements theſe powers had taken, to refuſe the harder task of putting her into poſſeſſion by force; when she might, and would not, procure to the English and Dutch, and her other allies, the eaſier task of defending her in this poſſeſſion.

I SAID that the meaſures mentioned above were rendered impracticable, by the emperor chiefly, becauſe they were rendered ſo likewiſe by other circumſtances at the ſame conjuncture. A principal one I shall mention, and it shall be drawn from the ſtate of our own country, and the diſpoſition

of our people. Let us take this up from king WILLIAM's acceſſion to our crown. During the whole progreſs that LEWIS the fourteenth made towards ſuch exorbitant power, as gave him well grounded hopes of acquiring at laſt to his family the Spaniſh monarchy, England had been either an idle ſpectator of all that paſſed on the continent, or a faint and uncertain ally againſt France, or a warm and ſure ally on her ſide, or a partial mediator between her and the powers confederated in their common defence. The revolution produced as great a change in our foreign conduct, as in our domeſtic eſtabliſhment: and our nation engaged with great ſpirit in the war of one thouſand ſix hundred and eighty eight. But then this ſpirit was raſh, preſumptuous, and ignorant, ill conducted at home, and ill ſeconded abroad: all which has been touched already. We had waged no long wars on the continent, nor been very deeply concerned in foreign confederacies, ſince the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The hiſtory of EDWARD the third, however, and of the firſt twelve or fifteen years of HENRY the ſixth might have taught us ſome general but uſeful leſſons, drawn from remote times, but applicable to the preſent. So might the example of HENRY the eighth, who ſquandered away great ſums for the profit of taking a town or the honor of having an emperor in his pay; and who divided afterwards by treaty the kingdom of France between himſelf and CHARLES the fifth, with ſucceſs ſo little anſwerable to ſuch an undertaking, that it is hard

to believe his imperial and English majeſty were both in earneſt. If they were ſo, they were both the bubbles of their preſumption. But it ſeems more likely that HENRY the eighth was bubbled on this occaſion by the great hopes that CHARLES held out to flatter his vanity: as he had been bubbled by his father-in-law FERDINAND, at the beginning of his reign, in the war of Navarre. But theſe reflections were not made, nor had we enough conſidered the example of ELIZABETH, the laſt of our princes who had made any conſiderable figure abroad, and from whom we might have learned to act with vigor, but to engage with caution, and always to proportion our aſſiſtance according to our abilities, and the real neceſſities of our allies. The frontiers of France were now ſo fortified, her commerce and her naval force were ſo encreaſed, her armies were grown ſo numerous, her troops were ſo diſciplined, ſo inured to war, and ſo animated by a long courſe of ſucceſsful campaigns, that they who looked on the ſituation of Europe could not fail to ſee how difficult the enterpriſe of reducing her power was become. Difficult as it was, we were obliged, on every account and by reaſons of all kinds, to engage in it: but then we ſhould have engaged with more forecaſt, and have conducted ourſelves in the management of it, not with leſs alacrity and ſpirit, but with more order, more oeconomy, and a better application of our efforts. But they who governed were glad to engage us at any rate: and we entered on this great ſcheme

of action, as our nation is too apt to do, hurried on by the ruling paſſion of the day. I have been told by ſeveral, who were on the ſtage of the world at this time, that the generality of our people believed, and were encouraged to believe, the war could not be long, if the king was vigorously ſupported: and there is a humdrum ſpeech of a ſpeaker, of the houſe of commons, I think, who humbly deſired his majeſty to take this opportunity of reconquering his ancient dutchy of Aquitain. We were ſoon awakened from theſe gaudy dreams. In ſeven or eight years no impreſſion had been made on France, that was beſieged as it were on every ſide: and after repeated defeats in the Low Countries, where king WILLIAM laid the principal ſtreſs of the war, his ſole triumph was the retaking of Namur, that had been taken by the French a few years before. Unſuſtained by ſucceſs abroad, we are not to wonder that the ſpirit flagged at home; nor that the diſcontents of thoſe who were averſe to the eſtabliſhed government, uniting with the far greater number of thoſe who disliked the adminiſtration, inflamed the general diſcontents of the nation, oppreſſed with taxes, pillaged by uſurers, plundered at ſea, and diſappointed at land. As we run into extremes always, ſome would have continued this war at any rate, even at the ſame rate: but it was not poſſible they ſhould prevail in ſuch a ſituation of affairs, and ſuch a diſpoſition of minds. They who got by the war, and made immenſe fortunes by the neceſſities of the public, were not ſo numerous

nor ſo powerful, as they have been ſince. The moneyed intereſt was not yet a rival able to cope with the landed intereſt, either in the nation or in parliament. The great corporations that had been erected more to ſerve the turn of party, than for any real national uſe, aimed indeed even then at the ſtrength and influence which they have ſince acquired in the legislature; but they had not made the ſame progreſs by promoting national corruption, as they and the court have made ſince. In ſhort, the other extreme prevailed. The generality of people grew as fond of getting out of the war, as they had been of entering into it: and thus far perhaps, conſidering how it had been conducted, they were not much to be blamed. But this was not all; for when king WILLIAM had made the peace, our martial ſpirit became at once ſo pacific, that we ſeemed reſolved to meddle no more in the affairs of the continent, at leaſt to employ our arms no more in the quarrels that might ariſe there: and accordingly we reduced our troops in England to ſeven thouſand men.

I HAVE ſometimes conſidered, in reflecting on theſe paſſages, what I ſhould have done, if I had ſat in parliament at that time; and have been forced to own myſelf, that I ſhould have voted for disbanding the army then; as I voted in the following parliament for cenſuring the partition-treaties. I am forced to own this, becauſe I remember how imperfect my notions were of the ſituation of Europe in that extraordinary criſis, and how much I ſaw the true intereſt of my own country in an

half light. But, my lord, I own it with ſome ſhame; becauſe in truth nothing could be more abſurd than the conduct we held. What! becauſe we had not reduced the power of France by the war, nor excluded the houſe of Bourbon from the Spaniſh ſucceſſion, nor compounded with her upon it by the peace; and becauſe the houſe of Auſtria had not helped herſelf, nor put it into our power to help her with more advantage and better proſpect of ſucceſs — were we to leave that whole ſucceſſion open to the invaſions of France, and to ſuffer even the contingency to ſubſiſt, of ſeeing thoſe monarchies united? What! becauſe it was become extravagant, after the trials ſo lately made, to think ourſelves any longer engaged by treaty, or obliged by good policy, to put the houſe of Auſtria in poſſeſſion of the whole Spaniſh monarchy, and to defend her in this poſſeſſion by force of arms, were we to leave the whole at the mercy of France? If we were not to do ſo, if we were not to do one of the three things that I ſaid above remained to be done, and if the emperor put it out of our power to do another of them with advantage; were we to put it ſtill more out of our power, and to wait unarmed for the death of the king of SPAIN? In fine, if we had not the proſpect of diſputing with France, ſo ſucceſsfully as we might have had it, the Spaniſh ſucceſſion, whenever it ſhould be open; were we not only to ſhew by diſarming, that we would not diſpute it at all, but to cenſure likewiſe the ſecond of the three things mentioned above, and which king

WILLIAM put in practice, the compounding with France, to prevent if poſſible a war, in which we were averſe to engage?

ALLOW me to push theſe reflections a little further, and to obſerve to your lordship, that if the propoſal of ſending the archduke into Spain had been accepted in time by the imperial court; and taken effect and become a meaſure of the confederacy, that war indeed would have been protracted; but France could not have hindered the paſſage of this prince and his German forces: and our fleet would have been better employed in eſcorting them, and in covering the coaſts of Spain and of the dominions of that crown both in Europe and in America, than it was in ſo many unmeaning expeditions from the battle of La Hogue to the end of the war. France indeed would have made her utmoſt efforts to have had ſatisfaction on her pretenſions, as ill founded as they were. She would have ended that war, as we began the next, when we demanded a reaſonable ſatisfaction for the emperor: and though I think that the allies would have had, in very many reſpects, more advantages in defending Spain, than in attacking France; yet, upon a ſuppoſition that the defence would have been as ill conducted as the attack was, and that by conſequence, whether CHARLES the ſecond had lived to the concluſion of this war, or had died before it, the war muſt have ended in ſome partition or other; this partition would have been made by the Spaniards themſelves. They had been forced

to compound with France on her former pretenſions, and they muſt and they would have compounded on theſe, with an Auſtrian prince on the throne, juſt as they compounded, and probably much better than they compounded, on the pretenſions we ſupported againſt them, when they had a prince of Bourbon on their throne. France could not have diſtreſſed the Spaniards, nor have over-run their monarchy, if they had been united; and they would have been united in this caſe, and ſupported by the whole confederacy: as we diſtreſſed both France and them, over-run their monarchy in one hemiſphere, and might have done ſo in both, when they were diſunited, and ſupported by France alone. France would not have acted, in ſuch negotiations, the ridiculous part which the emperor acted in thoſe that led to the peace of Utrecht, nor have made her bargain worſe by neglecting to make it in time. But the war ending as it did, though I cannot ſee how king WILLIAM could avoid leaving the crown of Spain and that entire monarchy at the diſcretion of LEWIS the fourteenth, otherwiſe than by compounding to prevent a new war he was in no ſort prepared to make; yet it is undeniable, that, by conſenting to a partition of their monarchy, he threw the Spaniards into the arms of France. The firſt partition might have taken place, perhaps, if the electoral prince of BAVARIA had lived, whom the French and Spaniards too would have ſeen much more willingly than the archduke on the throne of Spain.

Spain. For among all the parties into which that court was divided in one thouſand ſix hundred and ninety eight, when this treaty was made, that of Auſtria was grown the weakeſt, by the diſguſt taken at a German queen, and at the rapacity and inſolence of her favorites. The French were looked upon with eſteem and kindneſs at Madrid; but the Germans were become, or growing to be, objects of contempt to the miniſters, and of averſion to the people. The electoral prince died in one thouſand ſix hundred and ninety nine. The ſtar of Auſtria, ſo fatal to all thoſe who were obſtacles to the ambition of that houſe, prevailed; as the elector expreſſed himſelf in the firſt pangs of his grief. The ſtate of things changed very much by his death. The archduke was to have Spain and the Indies, according to a ſecond partition: and the Spaniards, who had expreſſed great reſentment at the firſt, were pushed beyond their bearing by this. They ſoon appeared to be ſo; for the ſecond treaty of partition was ſigned in March one thouſand ſeven hundred; and the will was made, to the beſt of my remembrance, in the October following. I ſhall not enter here into many particulars concerning theſe great events. They will be related faithfully, and I hope fully explained, in a work which your lordship may take the trouble very probably of peruſing ſome time or other, and which I ſhall rather leave, than give to the public. Something however muſt be ſaid more,

to continue and wind up this ſummary of the latter period of modern hiſtory.

FRANCE then ſaw her advantage, and improved it no doubt, though not in the manner, nor with the circumſtances, that ſome lying ſcriblers of memorials and anecdotes have advanced. She had ſent one of the ableſt men of her court to that of Madrid, the marshal of HARCOURT, and she had ſtipulated in the ſecond treaty of partition, that the archduke ſhould go neither into Spain nor the dutchy of Milan, during the life of CHARLES the ſecond. She was willing to have her option between a treaty and a will. By the acceptation of the will, all king WILLIAM's meaſures were broke. He was unprepared for war as much as when he made theſe treaties to prevent one; and if he meant in making them, what ſome wiſe, but refining men have ſuſpected, and what I confeſs I ſee no reaſon to believe, only to gain time by the difficulty of executing them, and to prepare for making war, whenever the death of the king of SPAIN ſhould alarm mankind, and rouſe his own ſubjects out of their inactivity and neglect of foreign intereſts, if ſo, he was diſappointed in that too; for France took poſſeſſion of the whole monarchy at once, and with univerſal concurrence, at leaſt without oppoſition or difficulty, in favor of the duke of ANJOU. By what has been obſerved, or hinted rather very ſhortly, and I fear a little confuſedly, it is plain that reducing the power of France, and ſecuring the whole Spaniſh ſucceſſion to the houſe of Auſtria,

were two points that king WILLIAM, at the head of the British and Dutch commonwealths and of the greateſt confederacy Europe had ſeen, was obliged to give up. All the acquiſitions that France cared to keep for the maintenance of her power were confirmed to her by the treaty of Ryſwic: and king WILLIAM allowed, indirectly at leaſt, the pretenſions of the houſe of Bourbon to the Spaniſh ſucceſſion, as LEWIS the fourteenth allowed, in the ſame manner, thoſe of the houſe of Auſtria, by the treaties of partition. Strange ſituation! in which no expedient remained to prepare for an event, viſibly ſo near, and of ſuch vaſt importance as the death of the king of SPAIN, but a partition of his monarchy, without his conſent, or his knowledge! If king WILLIAM had not made this partition, the emperor would have made one, and with as little regard to trade, to the barrier of the ſeven provinces, or to the general ſyſtem of Europe, as had been ſhewed by him when he made the private treaty with France already mentioned, in one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty eight. The miniſters of Vienna were not wanting to inſinuate to thoſe of France overtures of a ſeparate treaty, as more conducive to their common intereſts than the acceſſion of his imperial majeſty to that of partition. But the councils of Verſailles judged very reaſonably, that a partition made with England and Holland would be more effectual than any other, if a partition was to take place: and that ſuch a partition would be juſt as effectual as one made with the emperor,

to furnish arguments to the emiſſaries of France, and motives to the Spanish councils, if a will in favor of France could be obtained. I repeat it again; I cannot ſee what king WILLIAM could do in ſuch circumſtances as he found himſelf in after thirty years ſtruggle, except what he did: neither can I ſee how he could do what he did, eſpecially after the reſentment expreſſed by the Spaniards, and the furious memorial preſented by CANALES on the concluſion of the firſt treaty of partition, without apprehending that the conſequence would be a will in favor of France. He was in the worſt of all political circumſtances, and that wherein no one good meaſure remains to be taken; and out of which he left the two nations, at the head of whom he had been ſo long, to fight and negotiate themſelves and their confederates, as well as they could.

WHEN this will was made and accepted, LEWIS the fourteenth had ſucceeded, and the powers in oppoſition to him had failed, in all the great objects of intereſt and ambition, which they had kept in ſight for more than forty years; that is, from the beginning of the preſent period. The actors changed their parts in the tragedy that followed. The power, that had ſo long and ſo cruelly attacked, was now to defend, the Spanish monarchy: and the powers, that had ſo long defended, were now to attack it. Let us ſee how this was brought about: and that we may ſee it the better, and make a better judgment of all that paſſed from the death of CHARLES the ſecond to the peace of

Utrecht, let us go back to the time of his death, and conſider the circumſtances that formed this complicated ſtate of affairs in three views; a view of right, a view of policy, and a view of power.

THE right of ſucceeding to the crown of Spain would have been undoubtedly in the children of MARIA THERESA, that is, in the houſe of Bourbon; if this right had not been barred by the ſolemn renunciations ſo often mentioned. The pretenſions of the houſe of Auſtria were founded on theſe renunciations, on the ratification of them by the Pyrenean treaty, and the confirmation of them by the will of PHILIP the fourth. The pretenſions of the houſe of Bourbon were founded on a ſuppoſition, it was indeed no more, and a vain one too, that theſe renunciations were in their nature null. On this foot the diſpute of right ſtood during the life of CHARLES the ſecond, and on the ſame it would have continued to ſtand even after his death, if the renunciations had remained unshaken; if his will, like that of his father, had confirmed them, and had left the crown, in purſuance of them, to the houſe of Auſtria. But the will of CHARLES the ſecond, annulling theſe renunciations, took away the ſole foundation of the Auſtrian pretenſions; for, however this act might be obtained, it was juſt as valid as his father's, and was confirmed by the univerſal concurrence of the Spaniſh nation to the new ſettlement he made of that crown. Let it be, as I think it ought to be, granted, that the true heirs could not claim againſt renunciations that were, if I may ſay ſo, conditions of their

birth: but CHARLES the ſecond had certainly as good a right to change the courſe of ſucceſſion agreeable to the order of nature and the conſtitution of that monarchy, after his true heirs were born, as PHILIP the fourth had to change it contrary to this order and this conſtitution, before they were born, or at any other time. He had as good a right, in ſhort, to diſpenſe with the Pyrenean treaty, and to ſet it aſide in this reſpect, as his father had to make it: ſo that the renunciations being annulled by that party to the Pyrenean treaty who had exacted them, they could be deemed no longer binding, by virtue of this treaty, on the party who had made them. The ſole queſtion that remained therefore between theſe rival houſes, as to right, was this, whether the engagements taken by LEWIS the fourteenth in the partition treaties obliged him to adhere to the terms of the laſt of them in all events, and to deprive his family of the ſucceſſion which the king of SPAIN opened, and the Spaniſh nation offered to them; rather than to depart from a compoſition he had made, on pretenſions that were diſputable then, but were now out of diſpute? It may be ſaid, and it was ſaid, that the treaties of partition being abſolute, without any condition or exception relative to any diſpoſition the king of SPAIN had made or might make of his ſucceſſion, in favor of Bourbon or Auſtria; the diſpoſition made by his will, in favor of the duke of ANJOU, could not affect the engagements ſo lately taken by LEWIS the fourteenth in theſe treaties, nor diſpenſe with

a literal obſervation of them. This might be true on ſtrict principles of juſtice; but I apprehend that none of theſe powers, who exclaimed ſo loudly againſt the perfidy of France in this caſe, would have been more ſcrupulous in a parallel caſe. The maxim 'ſummum jus eſt ſumma injuria' would have been quoted, and the rigid letter of the treaties would have been ſoftened by an equitable interpretation of their ſpirit and intention. His imperial majeſty, above all, had not the leaſt color of right to exclaim againſt France on this occaſion; for in general, if his family was to be ſtripped of all the dominions they have acquired by breach of faith, and means much worſe than the acceptation of the will, even allowing all the invidious circumſtances imputed to the conduct of France to be true, the Auſtrian family would ſink from their preſent grandeur to that low ſtate they were in two or three centuries ago. In particular, the emperor, who had conſtantly refuſed to accede to the treaties of partition, or to ſubmit to the diſpoſitions made by them, had not the leaſt plauſible pretence to object to LEWIS the fourteenth, that he departed from them. Thus, I think, the right of the two houſes ſtood on the death of CHARLES the ſecond. The right of the Spaniards, an independent nation, to regulate their own ſucceſſion, or to receive the prince whom their dying monarch had called to it; and the right of England and Holland to regulate the ſucceſſion, to divide, and parcel out this monarchy in different lots, it would be equally foolish to go about to

eſtabliſh. One is too evident, the other too abſurd, to admit of any proof. But enough has been ſaid concerning a right, which was in truth little regarded by any of the parties concerned immediately or remotely in the whole courſe of theſe proceedings. Particular intereſts were alone regarded, and theſe were purſued as ambition, fear, reſentment, and vanity directed: I mean the ambition of the two houſes contending for ſuperiority of power; the fear of England and Holland leſt this ſuperiority ſhould become too great in either; the reſentment of Spain at the diſmemberment of that monarchy projected by the partition-treaties; and the vanity of that nation, as well as of the princes of the houſe of Bourbon: for as vanity mingled with reſentment to make the will, vanity had a great ſhare in determining the acceptation of it.

LET us now conſider the ſame conjuncture in a view of policy. The policy of the Spaniſh councils was this. They could not brook that their monarchy ſhould be divided: and this principle is expreſſed ſtrongly in the will of CHARLES the ſecond, where he exhorts his ſubjects not to ſuffer any diſmemberment or diminution of a monarchy founded by his predeceſſors with ſo much glory. Too weak to hinder this diſmemberment by their own ſtrength, too well appriſed of the little force and little views of the court of Vienna, and their old allies having engaged to procure this diſmemberment even by force of arms; nothing remained for them to do, upon this principle, but to detach France from the engagements of the partition treaties, by giving

their whole monarchy to a prince of the houſe of Bourbon. As much as may have been ſaid concerning the negotiations of France to obtain a will in her favor, and yet to keep in reſerve the advantages ſtipulated for her by the partition-treaties if ſuch a will could not be obtained, and though I am perſuaded that the marshal of HARCOURT, who helped to procure this will, made his court to LEWIS the fourteenth as much as the marshal of TALLARD, who negotiated the partitions; yet it is certain, that the acceptation of the will was not a meaſure definitively taken at Verſailles when the king of SPAIN died. The alternative divided thoſe councils, and, without entering at this time into the arguments urged on each ſide, adhering to the partitions ſeemed the cauſe of France, accepting the will that of the houſe of Bourbon.

IT has been ſaid by men of great weight in the councils of Spain, and was ſaid at that time by men as little fond of the houſe of Bourbon, or of the French nation, as their fathers had been; that if England and Holland had not formed a confederacy and begun a war, they would have made PHILIP the fifth as good a Spaniard as any of the preceding PHILIPS, and not have endured the influence of French councils in the adminiſtration of their government: but that we threw them entirely into the hands of France when we began the war, becauſe the fleets and armies of this crown being neceſſary to their defence, they could not avoid ſubmitting to this influence as long as the ſame neceſſity continued; and, in fact, we have

ſeen that the influence laſted no longer. But notwithſtanding this, it muſt be confeſſed, that a war was unavoidable. The immediate ſecuring of commerce and of barriers, the preventing an union of the two monarchies in ſome future time, and the preſervation of a certain degree at leaſt of equality in the ſcales of power, were points too important to England, Holland, and the reſt of Europe, to be reſted on the moderation of French, and the vigor of Spaniſh councils, under a prince of the houſe of France. If ſatisfaction to the houſe of Auſtria, to whoſe rights England and Holland shewed no great regard whilſt they were better founded than they were ſince the will, had been alone concerned; a drop of blood ſpilt, or five shillings ſpent in the quarrel, would have been too much profuſion. But this was properly the ſcale into which it became the common intereſt to throw all the weight that could be taken out of that of Bourbon. And therefore your lordship will find, that when negotiations with D'AVAUX were ſet on foot in Holland to prevent a war, or rather on our part to gain time to prepare for it, in which view the Dutch and we had both acknowledged PHILIP king of SPAIN; the great article we inſiſted on was, that reaſonable ſatisfaction should be given the emperor, upon his pretenſions founded on the treaty of partition. We could do no otherwiſe; and France, who offered to make the treaty of Ryſwic the foundation of that treaty, could do no otherwiſe than refuſe to conſent that the treaty of partition should be ſo, after accepting the will, and thereby engaging to

oppoſe all partition or diſmemberment of the Spaniſh monarchy. I ſhould mention none of the other demands of England and Holland, if I could neglect to point out to your lordship's obſervation, that the ſame artifice was employed at this time, to perplex the more a negotiation that could not ſucceed on other accounts, as we ſaw employed in the courſe of the war, by the English and Dutch miniſters, to prevent the ſucceſs of negotiations that might, and ought to have ſucceeded. The demand I mean is that of " a liberty not only „ to explain the terms propoſed, but to increaſe „ or amplify them in the courſe of the negotiation. " I do not remember the words, but this is the ſenſe, and this was the meaning of the confederates in both caſes.

IN the former, king WILLIAM was determined to begin the war by all the rules of good policy; ſince he could not obtain, nay ſince France could not grant in that conjuncture, nor without being forced to it by a war, what he was obliged by theſe very rules to demand. He intended therefore nothing by this negotiation, if it may be called ſuch, but to preſerve forms and appearances, and perhaps, which many have ſuſpected, to have time to prepare, as I hinted juſt now, both abroad and at home. Many things concurred to favor his preparations abroad. The alarm, that had been given by the acceptation of the will, was increaſed by every ſtep that France made to ſecure the effect of it. Thus, for inſtance, the ſurpriſing and ſeizing the Dutch troops, in the ſame night, and at the

ſame hour, that were diſperſed in the garriſons of the Spanish Netherlands, was not excuſed by the neceſſity of ſecuring thoſe places to the obedience of PHILIP, nor ſoftened by the immediate diſmiſſion of thoſe troops. The impreſſion it made was much the ſame as thoſe of the ſurpriſes and ſeizures of France in former uſurpations. No one knew then, that the ſovereignty of the ten provinces was to be yielded up to the elector of BAVARIA: and every one ſaw that there remained no longer any barrier between France and the ſeven provinces. At home, the diſpoſition of the nation was abſolutely turned to a war with France, on the death of king JAMES the ſecond, by the acknowledgment LEWIS the fourteenth made of his ſon as king of England. I know what has been ſaid in excuſe for this meaſure, taken as I believe, on female importunity; but certainly without any regard to public faith, to the true intereſt of France in thoſe circumſtances, or to the true intereſt of the prince thus acknowledged, in any. It was ſaid, that the treaty of Ryſwic obliging his moſt chriſtian majeſty only not to diſturb king WILLIAM in his poſſeſſion, he might, without any violation of it, have acknowledged this prince as king of England; according to the political caſuiſtry of the French, and the example of France, who finds no fault with the powers that treat with the kings of England, although the kings of England retain the title of kings of France; as well as the example of Spain, who makes no complaints that other ſtates treat with the kings of France, although the kings

of France retain the title of Navarre. But beſides that the examples are not appoſite, becauſe no other powers acknowledge in form the king of England to be king of France, nor the king of France to be king of Navarre; with what face could the French excuſe this meaſure? Could they excuſe it by urging that they adhered to the ſtrict letter of one article of the treaty of Ryſwic, againſt the plain meaning of that very article, and againſt the whole tenor of that treaty; in the ſame breath with which they juſtified the acceptation of the will, by pretending they adhered to the ſuppoſed ſpirit and general intention of the treaties of partition, in contradiction to the letter, to the ſpecific engagements, and to the whole purport of thoſe treaties? This part of the conduct of LEWIS the fourteenth may appear juſtly the more ſurpriſing, becauſe in moſt other parts of his conduct at the ſame time, and in ſome to his diſadvantage, he acted cautiously, endeavoured to calm the minds of his neighbours, to reconcile Europe to his grandſon's elevation, all to avoid all ſhew of beginning hoſtilities.

THOUGH king WILLIAM was determined to engage in a war with France and Spain, yet the ſame good policy, that determined him to engage, determined him not to engage too deeply. The engagement taken in the grand alliance of one thouſand ſeven hundred and one is, "To procure „ an equitable and reaſonable ſatisfaction to his „ imperial majeſty for his pretenſion to the Spaniſh „ ſucceſſion; and ſufficient ſecurity to the king of

„ ENGLAND, and the States General, for their „ dominions, and for the navigation and commerce „ of their ſubjects, and to prevent the union of „ the two monarchies of France and Spain." As king of England, as ſtateholder of Holland, he neither could, nor did engage any further. It may be diſputed perhaps among ſpeculative politicians, whether the balance of power in Europe would have been better preſerved by that ſcheme of partition, which the treaties, and particularly the laſt of them, propoſed, or by that which the grand alliance propoſed to be the object of the war? I think there is little room for ſuch a diſpute, as I ſhall have occaſion to ſay hereafter more expreſly. In this place I ſhall only ſay, that the object of this war, which king WILLIAM meditated, and queen ANNE waged, was a partition, by which a prince of the houſe of Bourbon, already acknowledged by us and the Dutch as king of Spain, was to be left on the throne of that diſmembered monarchy. The wiſdom of thoſe councils ſaw that the peace of Europe might be reſtored and ſecured on this foot, and that the liberties of Europe would be in no danger.

THE ſcales of the balance of power will never be exactly poized, nor in the preciſe point of equality either diſcernible or neceſſary to be diſcerned. It is ſufficient in this, as in other human affairs, that the deviation be not too great. Some there will always be. A conſtant attention to theſe deviations is therefore neceſſary. When they are little, their increaſe may be eaſily prevented by

early care and the precautions that good policy ſuggeſts. But when they become great for want of this care and theſe precautions, or by the force of unforeſeen events, more vigor is to be exerted and greater efforts to be made. But even in ſuch caſes, much reflection is neceſſary on all the circumſtances that form the conjuncture; leſt, by attacking with ill ſucceſs, the deviation be confirmed; and the power that is deemed already exorbitant become more ſo; and leſt, by attacking with good ſucceſs, whilſt one ſcale is pillaged, too much weight of power be thrown into the other. In ſuch caſes, he who has conſidered, in the hiſtories of former ages, the ſtrange revolutions that time produces, and the perpetual flux and reflux of public as well as private fortunes, of kingdoms and ſtates as well as of thoſe who govern or are governed in them, will incline to think, that if the ſcales can be brought back by a war, nearly, though not exactly, to the point they were at before this great deviation from it, the reſt may be left to accidents, and to the uſe that good policy is able to make of them.

WHEN CHARLES the fifth was at the heighth of his power, and in the zenith of his glory, when a king of France and a pope were at once his priſoners; it muſt be allowed, that, his ſituation and that of his neighbours compared; they had as much at leaſt to fear from him and from the houſe of Auſtria, as the neighbours of LEWIS the fourteenth had to fear from him and from the houſe of Bourbon, when, after all his other ſucceſs, one

of his grandchildren was placed on the Spanish throne. And yet among all the conditions of the ſeveral leagues againſt CHARLES the fifth, I do not remember that it was ever ſtipulated, that " no „ peace ſhould be made with him as long as he „ continued to be emperor and king of Spain; „ nor as long as any Auſtrian prince continued „ capable of uniting on his head the Imperial and „ Spaniſh crowns. "

IF your lordſhip makes the application, you will find that the difference of ſome circumſtances does not hinder this example from being very appoſite, and ſtrong to the preſent purpoſe. CHARLES the fifth was emperor and king of Spain; but neither was LEWIS the fourteenth king of Spain, nor PHILIP the fifth king of France. That had happened in one inſtance, which it was apprehended might happen in the other. It had happened, and it was reaſonably to be apprehended that it might happen again, and that the Imperial and Spaniſh crowns might continue, not only in the ſame family, but on the ſame heads; for meaſures were taken to ſecure the ſucceſſion of both to PHILIP the ſon of CHARLES. We do not find however that any confederacy was formed, any engagement taken, or any war made, to remove or prevent this great evil. The princes and ſtates of Europe contented themſelves to oppoſe the deſigns of CHARLES the fifth, and to check the growth of his power occaſionally, and as intereſt invited, or neceſſity forced them to do; not conſtantly. They did perhaps too little againſt him, and

ſometimes

ſometimes too much for him: but if they did too little of one kind, time and accident did the reſt. Diſtinct dominions, and different pretenſions, created contrary intereſts in the houſe of Auſtria: and on the abdication of CHARLES the fifth, his brother ſucceeded, not his ſon, to the empire. The houſe of Auſtria divided into a German and a Spaniſh branch: and if the two branches came to have a mutual influence on one another and frequently a common intereſt, it was not till one of them had fallen from grandeur, and till the other was rather aiming at it, than in poſſeſſion of it. In ſhort PHILIP was excluded from the imperial throne by ſo natural a progreſſion of cauſes and effects, ariſing not only in Germany but in his own family, that if a treaty had been made to exclude him from it in favor of FERDINAND, ſuch a treaty might have been ſaid very probably to have executed itſelf.

THE precaution I have mentioned, and that was neglected in this caſe without any detriment to the common cauſe of Europe, was not neglected in the grand alliance of one thouſand ſeven hundred and one. For in that, one of the ends propoſed by the war is, to obtain an effectual ſecurity againſt the contingent union of the crowns of France and Spain. The will of CHARLES the ſecond provides againſt the ſame contingency: and this great principle of preventing too much dominion and power from falling to the lot of either of the families of Bourbon or Auſtria, ſeemed to be agreed on all ſides; ſince in the partition-treaty

the ſame precaution was taken againſt an union of the Imperial and Spaniſh crowns. King WILLIAM was enough piqued againſt France. His ancient prejudices were ſtrong and well founded. He had been worſted in war, over-reached in negotiation, and perſonally affronted by her. England and Holland were ſufficiently alarmed and animated, and a party was not wanting, even in our iſland, ready to approve any engagements he would have taken againſt France and Spain, and in favor of the houſe of Auſtria; though we were leſs concerned, by any national intereſt, than any other power that took part in the war, either then, or afterwards. But this prince was far from taking a part beyond that which the particular intereſts of England and Holland, and the general intereſt of Europe, neceſſarily required. Pique muſt have no more a place than affection, in deliberations of this kind. To have engaged to dethrone PHILIP, out of reſentment to LEWIS the fourteenth, would have been a reſolution worthy of CHARLES the twelfth, king of Sweden, who ſacrificed his country, his people, and himſelf at laſt, to his revenge. To have engaged to conquer the Spaniſh monarchy for the houſe of Auſtria, or to go, in favor of that family, one ſtep beyond thoſe that were neceſſary to keep this houſe on a foot of rivalry with the other, would have been, as I have hinted, to act the part of a vaſſal, not of an ally. The former pawns his ſtate, and ruins his ſubjects, for the intereſt of his ſuperior lord, perhaps for his lord's humor, or his paſſion: the latter goes no

further than his own intereſt carries him; nor makes war for thoſe of another, nor even for his own if they are remote and contingent, as if he fought pro aris et focis, for his religion, his liberty, and his property. Agreeably to theſe principles of good policy, we entered into the war that began on the death of CHARLES the ſecond; but we ſoon departed from them, as I ſhall have occaſion to obſerve in conſidering the ſtate of things, at this remarkable juncture, in a view of ſtrength.

LET me recall here what I have ſaid ſomewhere elſe. They who are in the ſinking ſcale of the balance of power do not eaſily, nor ſoon, come off from the habitual prejudices of ſuperiority over their neighbours, nor from the confidence that ſuch prejudices inſpire. From the year one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty ſeven, to the end of that century, France had been conſtantly in arms, and her arms had been ſucceſsful. She had ſuſtained a war, without any confederates againſt the principal powers of Europe confederated againſt her, and had finiſhed it with advantage on every ſide, juſt before the death of the king of SPAIN. She continued armed after the peace, by ſea and land. She increaſed her forces, while other nations reduced theirs, and was ready to defend, or to invade her neighbours, whilſt, their confederacy being diſſolved, they were in no condition to invade her, and in a bad one to defend themſelves. Spain and France had now one common cauſe. The electors of BAVARIA and COLOGNE ſupported

it in Germany, the duke of SAVOY was an ally, the duke of MANTUA a vaſſal of the two crowns in Italy. In a word, appearances were formidable on that ſide; and if a diſtruſt of ſtrength, on the ſide of the confederacy, had induced England and Holland to compound with France for a partition of the Spaniſh ſucceſſion, there ſeemed to be ſtill greater reaſon for this diſtruſt after the acceptation of the will, the peaceable and ready ſubmiſſion of the entire monarchy of Spain to PHILIP, and all the meaſures taken to ſecure him in this poſſeſſion. Such appearances might well impoſe. They did ſo on many, and on none more than on the French themſelves, who engaged with great confidence and ſpirit in the war; when they found it, as they might well expect it would be, unavoidable. The ſtrength of France however, though great, was not ſo great as the French thought it, nor equal to the efforts they undertook to make. Their engagement, to maintain the Spaniſh monarchy entire under the dominion of PHILIP, exceeded their ſtrength. Our engagement, to procure ſome out-skirts of it for the houſe of Auſtria, was not in the ſame diſproportion to our ſtrength. If I ſpeak poſitively on this occaſion, yet I cannot be accuſed of preſumption; becauſe, how diſputable ſoever theſe points might be when they were points of political ſpeculation, they are ſuch no longer, and the judgment I make is dictated to me by experience. France threw herſelf into the ſinking ſcale, when she accepted the will. Her ſcale continued to ſink during the whole courſe

of the war, and might have been kept by the peace as low as the true intereſt of Europe required. What I remember to have heard the duke of MARLBOROUGH ſay, before he went to take on him the command of the army in the Low Countries in one thouſand ſeven hundred and two, proved true. The French miſreckoned very much, if they made the ſame compariſon between their troops and thoſe of their enemies, as they had made in precedent wars. Thoſe that had been oppoſed to them, in the laſt, were raw for the moſt part when it began, the British particularly: but they had been diſciplined, if I may ſay ſo, by their defeats. They were grown to be veteran at the peace of Ryſwic, and though many had been disbanded, yet they had been disbanded lately: ſo that even theſe were eaſily formed anew, and the ſpirit that had been raiſed continued in all. Supplies of men to recruit the armies were more abundant on the ſide of the confederacy, than on that of the two crowns: a neceſſary conſequence of which it ſeemed to be, that thoſe of the former would grow better, and thoſe of the latter worſe, in a long, extenſive, and bloody war. I believe it proved ſo; and if my memory does not deceive me, the French were forced very early to ſend recruits to their armies, as they ſend ſlaves to their gallies. A compariſon between thoſe who were to direct their councils, and to conduct the armies on both ſides, is a task it would become me little to undertake. The event ſhewed, that if France had had her CONDE, her TURENNE, or her

LUXEMBURG, to oppoſe to the confederates: the confederates might have oppoſed to her, with equal confidence, their EUGENE of Savoy, their MARLBOROUGH, or their STARENBERG. But there is one obſervation I cannot forbear to make. The alliances were concluded, the quotas were ſettled, and the ſeaſon for taking the field approached, when king WILLIAM died. The event could not fail to occaſion ſome conſternation on one ſide, and to give ſome hopes on the other; for, notwithſtanding the ill ſucceſs with which he made war generally, he was looked upon as the ſole centre of union that could keep together the great confederacy then forming: and how much the French feared, from his life, had appeared a few years before, in the extravagant and indecent joy they expreſſed on a falſe report of his death. A ſhort time ſhewed how vain the fears of ſome and the hopes of others were. By his death, the duke of MARLBOROUGH was raiſed to the head of the army, and indeed of the confederacy: where he, a new, a private man, a ſubject, acquired by merit and by management a more deciding influence, than high birth, confirmed authority, and even the crown of Great Britain, had given to king WILLIAM. Not only all the parts of that vaſt machine, the grand alliance, were kept more compact and entire; but a more rapid and vigorous motion was given to the whole: and, inſtead of languiſhing out diſaſtrous campaigns, we ſaw every ſcene of the war full of action. All thoſe wherein he appeared, and many of thoſe wherein he was not then an actor, but

abettor however of their action, were crowned with the moſt triumphant ſucceſs. I take with pleaſure this opportunity of doing juſtice to that great man, whoſe faults I knew, whoſe virtues I admired; and whoſe memory, as the greateſt general and as the greateſt miniſter that our country or perhaps any other has produced, I honor. But beſides this, the obſervation I have made comes into my ſubject, ſince it ſerves to point out to your lordship the proof of what I ſaid above, that France undertook too much, when she undertook to maintain the Spanish monarchy entire in the poſſeſſion of PHILIP: and that we undertook no more than what was proportionable to our ſtrength, when we undertook to weaken that monarchy by diſmembering it, in the hands of a prince of the houſe of Bourbon, which we had been diſabled by ill fortune and worſe conduct to keep out of them. It may be ſaid that the great ſucceſs of the confederates againſt France proves that their generals were ſuperior to her's, but not that their forces and their national ſtrength were ſo; that with the ſame force with which she was beaten, she might have been victorious; that if she had been ſo, or if the ſucceſs of the war had varied, or been leſs deciſive againſt her in Germany, in the Low Countries, and in Italy, as it was in Spain, her ſtrength would have appeared ſufficient, and that of the confederacy inſufficient. Many things may be urged to deſtroy this reaſoning: I content myſelf with one. France could not long have made even the unſucceſsful efforts she did

make, if England and Holland had done what it is undeniable they had ſtrength to do; if beſides pillaging, I do not ſay conquering, the Spaniſh Weſt-Indies, they had hindered the French from going to the South Sea; as they did annually during the whole courſe of the war without the leaſt moleſtation, and from whence they imported into France in that time as much ſilver and gold as the whole ſpecies of that kingdom amounted to. With this immenſe and conſtant ſupply of wealth France was reduced in effect to bankruptcy before the end of the war. How much ſooner muſt ſhe have been ſo, if this ſupply had been kept from her? The confeſſion of France herſelf is on my ſide. She confeſſed her inability to ſupport what she had undertaken, when she ſued for peace as early as the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix. She made her utmoſt efforts to anſwer the expectation of the Spaniards, and to keep their monarchy entire. When experience had made it evident that this was beyond her power, she thought herſelf juſtified to the Spaniſh nation, in conſenting to a partition, and was ready to conclude a peace with the allies on the principles of their grand alliance. But as France ſeemed to flatter herſelf, till experience made her deſirous to abandon an enterpriſe that exceeded her ſtrength; you will find, my lord, that her enemies began to flatter themſelves in their turn, and to form deſigns and take engagements that exceeded theirs. Great Britain was drawn into theſe engagements little by little; for I do not remember any parliamentary

declaration for continuing the war till PHILIP ſhould be dethroned, before the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix: and then ſuch a declaration was judged neceſſary to ſecond the reſolution of our miniſters and our allies, in departing from the principles of the grand alliance, and in propoſing not only the reduction of the French, but the conqueſt of the Spaniſh monarchy, as the objects of the war. This new plan had taken place, and we had begun to act upon it, two years before, when the treaty with Portugal was concluded, and the archduke CHARLES, now emperor, was ſent into Portugal firſt, and into Catalonia afterwards, and was acknowledged and ſupported as king of Spain.

WHEN your lordſhip peruſes the anecdotes of the times here ſpoken of, and conſiders the courſe and event of the great war which broke out on the death of the king of Spain, CHARLES the ſecond, and was ended by the treaties of Utrecht and Raſtat; you will find, that in order to form a true judgment on the whole you muſt conſider very attentively the great change made by the new plan that I have mentioned; and compare it with the plan of the grand alliance, relatively to the general intereſt of Europe, and the particular intereſt of your own country. It will not, becauſe it cannot, be denied, that all the ends of the grand alliance might have been obtained by a peace in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix. I need not recall the events of that, and of the precedent years of the war. Not only the arms of France had

been defeated on every ſide; but the inward ſtate of that kingdom was already more exhauſted than it had ever been. She went on indeed, but she ſtaggered and reeled under the burden of the war. Our condition, I ſpeak of Great Britain, was not quite ſo bad; but the charge of the war increaſed annually upon us. It was evident that this charge muſt continue to increaſe, and it was no leſs evident that our nation was unable to bear it without falling ſoon into ſuch diſtreſs, and contracting ſuch debts, as we have ſeen and felt, and ſtill feel. The Dutch neither reſtrained their trade, nor over-loaded it with taxes. They ſoon altered the proportion of their quotas, and were deficient even after this alteration in them. But, however, it muſt be allowed that they exerted their whole ſtrength; and they and we paid the whole charge of the war. Since therefore by ſuch efforts as could not be continued any longer, without oppreſſing and impoverishing theſe nations to a degree that no intereſt except that of their very being, nor any engagement of aſſiſting an alliance totis viribus can require, France was reduced, and all the ends of the war were become attainable; it will be worth your lordship's while to conſider why the true uſe was not made of the ſucceſs of the confederates againſt France and Spain, and why a peace was not concluded in the fifth year of the war. When your lordship conſiders this, you will compare in your thoughts what the ſtate of Europe would have been, and that of your own country might have been, if the plan of the grand alliance

had been purſued: with the poſſible as well as certain, the contingent as well as neceſſary, conſequences of changing this plan in the manner it was changed. You will be of opinion, I think, and it ſeems to me, after more than twenty years of recollection, re-examination, and reflection, that impartial poſterity muſt be of the ſame opinion; you will be of opinion, I think, that the war was wiſe and juſt before the change, becauſe neceſſary to maintain that equality among the powers of Europe on which the public peace and common proſperity depends: and that it was unwiſe and unjuſt after this change, becauſe unneceſſary to this end, and directed to other and to contrary ends. You will be guided by undeniable facts to diſcover, through all the falſe colors which have been laid, and which deceived many at the time, that the war, after this change, became a war of paſſion, of ambition, of avarice, and of private intereſt; the private intereſt of particular perſons and particular ſtates; to which the general intereſt of Europe was ſacrificed ſo entirely, that if the terms inſiſted on by the confederates had been granted, nay if even thoſe which France was reduced to grant, in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ten, had been accepted, ſuch a new ſyſtem of power would have been created as might have expoſed the balance of this power to deviations, and the peace of Europe to troubles, not inferior to thoſe that the war was deſigned, when it began, to prevent. Whilſt you obſerve this in general, you will find particular occaſion to lament the fate of Great Britain, in the midſt of triumphs that

have been founded ſo high. She had triumphed indeed to the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix incluſively: but what were her triumphs afterwards? What was her ſucceſs after she proceeded on the new plan? I shall ſay ſomething on that head immediately. Here let me only ſay, that the glory of taking towns, and winning battles, is to be meaſured by the utility that reſults from thoſe victories. Victories, that bring honor to the arms, may bring shame to the councils, of a nation. To win a battle, to take a town, is the glory of a general, and of an army. Of this glory we had a very large share in the courſe of the war. But the glory of a nation is to proportion the ends she propoſes, to her intereſt and her ſtrength; the means she employs to the ends she propoſes, and the vigor she exerts to both. Of this glory, I apprehend, we have had very little to boaſt, at any time, and particularly in the great conjuncture of which I am ſpeaking. The reaſons of ambition, avarice, and private intereſt, which engaged the princes and ſtates of the confederacy to depart from the principles of the grand alliance, were no reaſons for Great Britain. She neither expected nor deſired any thing more than what she might have obtained by adhering to thoſe principles. What hurried our nation then, with ſo much ſpirit and ardor, into thoſe of the new plan? Your lordship will anſwer this queſtion to yourſelf, I believe: by the prejudices and rashneſs of party; by the influence that the firſt ſucceſſes of the confederate arms gave to our miniſters; and the popularity they gave, if I may ſay ſo, to the

war; by ancient, and fresh reſentments, which the unjuſt and violent uſurpations, in short the whole conduct of LEWIS the fourteenth for forty years together, his haughty treatment of other princes and ſtates, and even the ſtyle of his court, had created; and, to mention no more, by a notion, groundleſs but prevalent, that he was and would be maſter as long as his grandſon was king of Spain, and that there could be no effectual meaſure taken, though the grand alliance ſuppoſed that there might, to prevent a future union of the two monarchies, as long as a prince of the houſe of Bourbon ſat on the Spanish throne. That ſuch a notion should have prevailed, in the firſt confuſion of thoughts which the death and will of CHARLES the ſecond produced, among the generality of men, who ſaw the fleets and armies of France take poſſeſſion of all the parts of the Spanish monarchy, is not to be wondered at by thoſe that conſider how ill the generality of mankind are informed, how incapable they are of judging; and yet how ready to pronounce judgment; in fine, how inconſiderately they follow one another in any popular opinion which the heads of party broach, or to which the firſt appearances of things have given occaſion. But, even at this time, the councils of England and Holland did not entertain this notion. They acted on quite another, as might be shewn in many inſtances, if any other beſides that of the grand alliance was neceſſary. When theſe councils therefore ſeemed to entertain this notion afterwards, and acted and took engagements

to act upon it, we muſt conclude that they had other motives. They could not have theſe; for they knew, that as the Spaniards had been driven by the two treaties of partition to give their monarchy to a prince of the houſe of Bourbon, ſo they were driven into the arms of France by the war that we made to force a third upon them. If we acted rightly on the principles of the grand alliance, they acted rightly on thoſe of the will: and if we could not avoid making an offenſive war, at the expence of forming and maintaining a vaſt confederacy, they could not avoid purchaſing the protection and aſſiſtance of France in a defenſive war, and eſpecially in the beginning of it, according to what I have ſomewhere obſerved already, by yielding to the authority and admitting the influence of that court in all the affairs of their government. Our miniſters knew therefore, that if any inference was to be drawn from the firſt part of this notion, it was for ſhortening, not prolonging, the war; for delivering the Spaniards as ſoon as poſſible from habits of union and intimacy with France; not for continuing them under the ſame neceſſity, till by length of time theſe habits ſhould be confirmed. As to the latter part of this notion, they knew that it was falſe and ſilly, GARTH the beſt natured ingenious wild man I ever knew, might be in the right when he ſaid, in ſome of his poems at that time,

" — An Auſtrian prince alone,
„ Is fit to nod upon a Spaniſh throne."

The ſetting an Auſtrian prince upon it was, no

doubt, the ſureſt expedient to prevent an union of the two monarchies of France and Spain; juſt as ſetting a prince of the houſe of Bourbon on that throne was the ſureſt expedient to prevent an union of the Imperial and Spanish crowns. But it was equally falſe to ſay, in either caſe, that this was the ſole expedient. It would be no paradox, but a propoſition eaſily proved, to advance, that if theſe unions had been effectually provided againſt, the general intereſt of Europe would have been little concerned whether PHILIP or CHARLES had nodded at Madrid. It would be likewiſe no paradox to ſay, that the contingency of uniting France and Spain under the ſame prince appeared more remote, about the middle of the laſt great war, when the dethronement of PHILIP in favor of CHARLES was made a condition of peace ſine qua non, than the contingency of an union of the Imperial and Spanish crowns. Nay, I know not whether it would be a paradox to affirm, that the expedient that was taken, and that was always obvious to be taken, of excluding PHILIP and his race from the ſucceſſion of France, by creating an intereſt in all the other princes of the blood, and by conſequence a party in France itſelf, for their excluſion, whenever the caſe ſhould happen, was not in its nature more effectual than any that could have been taken: and ſome muſt have been taken, not only to exclude CHARLES from the empire whenever the caſe ſhould happen that happened ſoon, the death of his brother JOSEPH without iſſue male, but his poſterity likewiſe in

all future vacancies of the imperial throne. The expedient that was taken againſt PHILIP at the treaty of Utrecht, they who oppoſed the peace attempted to ridicule; but ſome of them have had occaſion ſince that time to ſee, though the caſe has not happened, how effectual it would have been if it had: and he who ſhould go about to ridicule it after our experience, would only make himſelf ridiculous. Notwithſtanding all this, he, who tranſports himſelf back to that time, muſt acknowledge, that the confederated powers in general could not but be of GARTH's mind, and think it more agreeable to the common intereſt of Europe, that a branch of Auſtria, rather than a branch of Bourbon, ſhould gather the Spaniſh ſucceſſion, and that the maritime powers, as they are called impertinently enough with reſpect to the ſuperiority of Great Britain, might think it was for their particular intereſt to have a prince, dependent for ſome time at leaſt on them, king of Spain, rather than a prince whoſe dependence, as long as he ſtood in any, muſt be naturally on France. I do not ſay, as ſome have done, a prince whoſe family was an old ally, rather than a prince whoſe family was an old enemy; becauſe I lay no weight on the gratitude of princes, and am as much perſuaded that an Auſtrian king of Spain would have made us returns of that ſort in no other proportion than of his want of us, as I am that PHILIP and his race will make no other returns of the ſame ſort to France. If this affair had been entire, therefore, on the death of the king of SPAIN; if we had made no partition, nor

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he any will, the whole monarchy of Spain would have been the prize to be fought for: and our wishes, and ſuch efforts as we were able to make, in the moſt unprovided condition imaginable, muſt have been on the ſide of Auſtria. But it was far from being entire. A prince of the houſe of Auſtria might have been on the ſpot, before the king of SPAIN died, to gather his ſucceſſion; but inſtead of this a prince of the houſe of Bourbon was there ſoon afterwards, and took poſſeſſion of the whole monarchy, to which he had been called by the late king's will, and by the voice of the Spaniſh nation. The councils of England and Holland therefore preferred very wiſely, by their engagements in the grand alliance, what was more practicable though leſs eligible, to what they deemed more eligible; but ſaw become by the courſe of events, if not abſolutely impracticable, yet an enterpriſe of more length, more difficulty, and greater expence of blood and treaſure, than theſe nations were able to bear; or than they ought to bear, when their ſecurity and that of the reſt of Europe might be ſufficiently provided for at a cheaper rate. If the confederates could not obtain, by the force of their arms, the ends of the war, laid down in the grand alliance, to what purpoſe would it be to ſtipulate for more? And if they were able to obtain theſe, it was evident that, whilſt they diſmembered the Spaniſh monarchy they muſt reduce the power of France. This happened; the Low Countries were conquered; the French were driven out of Germany and Italy; and LEWIS the

fourteenth, who had ſo long and ſo lately ſet mankind at defiance, was reduced to ſue for peace.

IF it had been granted him in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix, on what foot muſt it have been granted? The allies had already in their power all the ſtates that were to compoſe the reaſonable ſatisfaction for the emperor. I ſay, in their power; becauſe though Naples and Sicily were not actually reduced at that time, yet the expulſion of the French out of Italy, and the diſpoſition of the people of thoſe kingdoms, conſidered, it was plain the allies might reduce them when they pleaſed. The confederate arms were ſuperior till then in Spain, and ſeveral provinces acknowledged CHARLES the third. If the reſt had been yielded to him by treaty, all that the new plan required had been obtained. If the French would not yet have abandoned PHILIP, as we had found that the Caſtilians would not even when our army was at Madrid, all that the old plan, the plan of the grand alliance required, had been obtained; but ſtill France and Spain had given nothing to purchaſe a peace, and they were in circumſtances not to expect it without purchaſing it. They would have purchaſed it, my lord: and France, as well as Spain, would have contributed a larger ſhare of the price, rather than continue the war, in her exhauſted ſtate. Such a treaty of peace would have been a third treaty of partition indeed, but vaſtly preferable to the two former. The great objection to the former was drawn from that conſiderable increaſe of dominion, which the crown of France, and not a branch of

the houſe of Bourbon, acquired by them. I know what may be ſaid ſpeciously enough to perſuade, that ſuch an increaſe of dominion would not have augmented, but would rather have weakened the power of France, and what examples may be drawn from hiſtory to countenance ſuch an opinion. I know likewiſe, that the compact figure of France, and the contiguity of all her provinces, make a very eſſential part of the force of her monarchy. Had the deſigns of CHARLES the eighth, LEWIS the twelfth, FRANCIS the firſt, and HENRY the ſecond, ſucceeded, the dominions of France would have been more extenſive, and I believe the ſtrength of her monarchy would have been leſs. I have ſometimes thought that even the loſs of the battle of St. Quentin, which obliged HENRY the ſecond to recal the duke of GUISE with his army out of Italy, was in this reſpect no unhappy event. But the reaſoning which is good, I think, when applied to thoſe times, will not hold when applied to ours, and to the caſe I conſider here; the ſtate of France, the ſtate of her neighbours, and the whole conſtitution of Europe being ſo extremely different. The objection therefore to the two treaties of partition had a real weight. The power of France, deemed already exorbitant, would have been increaſed by this acceſſion of dominion, in the hands of LEWIS the fourteenth: and the uſe he intended to make of it by keeping Italy and Spain in awe, appears in the article that gave him the ports on the Tuſcan coaſt, and the province of Guipuſcoa. This king WILLIAM might, and, I queſtion not, did

ſee; but that prince might think too, that for this very reaſon LEWIS the fourteenth would adhere, in all events, to the treaty of partition: and that theſe conſequences were more remote, and would be leſs dangerous, than thoſe of making no partition at all. The partition, even the worſt that might have been made, by a treaty of peace in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix, would have been the very reverſe of this. France would have been weakened, and her enemies ſtrengthened, by her conceſſions on the ſide of the Low Countries, of Germany, and Savoy. If a prince of her royal family had remained in poſſeſſion of Spain and the Weſt-Indies, no advantage would have accrued to her by it, and effectual bars would have been oppoſed to an union of the two monarchies. The houſe of Auſtria would have had a reaſonable ſatisfaction for that ſhadow of right, which a former partition gave her. She had no other after the will of CHARLES the ſecond; and this may be juſtly termed a ſhadow, ſince England, Holland, and France could confer no real right to the Spaniſh ſucceſſion, nor to any part of it. She had declined acceding to that partition, before France departed from it, and would have preferred the Italian provinces, without Spain and the Weſt-Indies, to Spain and the Weſt-Indies without the Italian provinces. The Italian provinces would have fallen to her ſhare by this partition. The particular demands of England and Holland would have ſuffered no difficulty, and thoſe that we were obliged by treaty to make for others would have been eaſy

to adjuſt. Would not this have been enough, my lord, for the public ſecurity, for the common intereſt, and for the glory of our arms? To have humbled and reduced, in five campaigns, a power that had diſturbed and inſulted Europe almoſt forty years; to have reſtored, in ſo ſhort a time, the balance of power in Europe to a ſufficient point of equality, after it had been more than fifty years, that is from the treaty of Weſtphalia, in a gradual deviation from this point; in ſhort to have retrieved, in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix, a game that was become deſperate at the beginning of the century. To have done all this before the war had exhauſted our ſtrength, was the utmoſt ſure that any man could deſire who intended the public good alone: and no honeſt reaſon ever was, nor ever will be given, why the war was protracted any longer; why we neither made peace after a ſhort, vigorous, and ſucceſsful war, nor put it entirely out of the power of France to continue at any rate a long one. I have ſaid, and it is true, that this had been entirely out of her power, if we had given greater interruption to the commerce of Old and New Spain, and if we had hindered France from importing annually, from the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and two, ſuch immenſe treaſures as ſhe did import by the ſhips ſhe ſent, with the permiſſion of Spain, to the South Sea. It has been advanced, and it is a common opinion, that we were reſtrained by the jealouſy of the Dutch from making uſe of the liberty given by treaty to them and us, and which, without his

imperial majeſty's leave, ſince we entered into the war, we might have taken, of making conqueſts the Spanish Weſt-Indies. Be it ſo. But to go to the South Seas, to trade there if we could, to pillage the Weſt-Indies without making conqueſts if we could not, and, whether we traded or whether we pillaged, to hinder the French from trading there; was a meaſure that would have given, one ought to think, no jealouſy to the Dutch, who might, and it is to be ſuppoſed would, have taken their part in theſe expeditions; or if it had given them jealouſy, what could they have replied when a British miniſter had told them: " That it little „ became them to find fault that we traded with „ or pillaged the Spaniards in the Weſt-Indies to „ the detriment of our common enemy, whilſt we „ connived at them who traded with this enemy to „ his and their great advantage, againſt our remon- „ ſtrances, and in violation of the condition upon „ which we had given the firſt augmentation of „ our forces in the Low Countries? " We might have purſued this meaſure notwithſtanding any engagement that we took by the treaty with Portugal, if I remember that treaty right: but inſtead of this, we waſted our forces, and ſquandered millions after millions in ſupporting our alliance with this crown, and in purſuing the chimerical project which was made the object of this alliance. I call it chimerical, becauſe it was equally ſo, to expect a revolution in favor of CHARLES the third on the ſlender authority of ſuch a trifler as the admiral of Caſtile; and, when this failed us, to hope to conquer Spain by the aſſiſtance of the Portu-

gueſe, and the revolt of the Catalans. Yet this was the foundation upon which the new plan of the war was built, and ſo many ruinous engagements were taken.

THE particular motives of private men, as well as of princes and ſtates, to protract the war, are partly known, and partly gueſſed, at this time. But whenever that time comes, and I am perſuaded it will come, when their ſecret motives, their ſecret deſigns, and intrigues, can be laid open, I preſume to ſay to your lordship that the moſt confuſed ſcene of iniquity, and folly, that it is poſſible to imagine, will appear. In the mean while, if your lordship conſiders only the treaty of barrier, as my lord TOWNSHEND ſigned it, without, nay in truth, againſt orders; for the duke of MARLBOROUGH, though joint plenipotentiary, did not: if you conſider the famous preliminaries of one thouſand ſeven hundred and nine, which we made a mockshew of ratifying, though we knew that they would not be accepted; for ſo the marquis of TORCY had told the penſionary before he left the Hague, as the ſaid marquis has aſſured me very often ſince that time: if you enquire into the anecdotes of Gertruydenberg, and if you conſult other authentic papers that are extant, your lordship will ſee the policy of the new plan, I think, in this light. Though we had refuſed, before the war began, to enter into engagements for the conqueſt of Spain, yet as ſoon as it began, when the reaſon of things was ſtill the ſame, for the ſucceſs of our firſt campaign cannot be ſaid to have altered it, we entered

into theſe very engagements. By the treaty wherein we took theſe engagements firſt, Portugal was brought into the grand alliance; that is, she conſented to employ her formidable forces againſt PHILIP, at the expence of England and Holland, provided we would debar ourſelves from making any acquiſitions, and the houſe of Auſtria promiſe, that she should acquire many important places in Spain, and an immenſe extent of country in America. By ſuch bargains as this, the whole confederacy was formed, and held together. Such means were indeed effectual to multiply enemies to France and Spain; but a project ſo extenſive and ſo difficult as to make many bargains of this kind neceſſary, and neceſſary for a great number of years, and for a very uncertain event, was a project into which, for this very reaſon, England and Holland should not have entered. It is worthy your obſervation, my lord, that theſe bad bargains would not have been continued, as they were almoſt to our immediate ruin, if the war had not been protracted under the pretended neceſſity of reducing the whole Spaniſh monarchy to the obedience of the houſe of Auſtria. Now, as no other confederate except Portugal was to receive his recompence by any diſmemberment of dominions in Old or New Spain, the engagements we took to conquer this whole monarchy had no viſible neceſſary cauſe, but the procuring the acceſſion of this power, that was already neuter, to the grand alliance. This acceſſion, as I have ſaid before, ſerved only to make us neglect immediate and

certain advantages, for remote and uncertain hopes; and chuſe to attempt the conqueſt of the Spaniſh nation at our own vaſt expence, whom we might have ſtarved, and by ſtarving reduced both the French and them, at their expence.

I CALLED the neceſſity of reducing the whole Spaniſh monarchy to the obedience of the houſe of Auſtria, a pretended neceſſity: and pretended it was, not real, without doubt. But I am apt to think your lordſhip may go further, and find ſome reaſons to ſuſpect, that the opinion itſelf of this neceſſity was not very real, in the minds of thoſe who urged it: in the minds I would ſay of the able men among them; for that it was real in ſome of our zealous Britiſh politicians, I do them the juſtice to believe. Your lordſhip may find reaſons to ſuſpect perhaps, that this opinion was ſet up rather to occaſion a diverſion of the forces of France, and to furniſh pretences for prolonging the war for other ends.

BEFORE the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ten, the war was kept alive with alternate ſucceſs in Spain; and it may be ſaid therefore, that the deſign of conquering this kingdom continued, as well as the hopes of ſucceeding. But why then did the States General refuſe, in one thouſand ſeven hundred and nine, to admit an article in the barrier-treaty, by which they would have obliged themſelves to procure the whole Spaniſh monarchy to the houſe of Auſtria, when that zealous politician my lord TOWNSHEND preſſed them to it? If their opinion of the neceſſity of

carrying on the war, till this point could be obtained, was real; why did they riſque the immenſe advantages given them with ſo much profuſe generoſity by this treaty, rather than conſent to an engagement that was ſo conformable to their opinion?

AFTER the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ten, it will not be ſaid, I preſume, that the war could be ſupported in Spain with any proſpect of advantage on our ſide. We had ſufficiently experienced how little dependence could be had on the vigor of the Portugueſe; and how firmly the Spaniſh nation in general, the Caſtilians in particular, were attached to PHILIP. Our armies had been twice at Madrid, this prince had been twice driven from the capital, his rival had been there, none ſtirred in favor of the victorious, all wished and acted for the vanquiſhed. In ſhort the falſhood of all thoſe lures, by which we had been enticed to make war in Spain, had appeared ſufficiently in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix; but was ſo grosly evident in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ten, that Mr. CRAGGS, who was ſent towards the end of that year by Mr. STANHOPE into England, on commiſſions which he executed with much good ſenſe and much addreſs, owned to me, that, in Mr. STANHOPE's opinion, and he was not apt to deſpond of ſucceſs, eſpecially in the execution of his own projects, nothing could be done more in Spain, the general attachment of the people to PHILIP, and their averſion to CHARLES conſidered: that armies of twenty or

thirty thouſand men might walk about that country till dooms-day, ſo he expreſſed himſelf, without effect: that wherever they came, the people would ſubmit to CHARLES the third out of terror, and, as ſoon as they were gone, proclaim PHILIP the fifth again out of affection: that to conquer Spain required a great army; and to keep it, a greater.

WAS it poſſible, after this, to think in good earneſt of conquering Spain, and could they be in good earneſt who continued to hold the ſame language, and to inſiſt on the ſame meaſures? Could they be ſo in the following year, when the emperor JOSEPH died? CHARLES was become then the ſole ſurviving male of the houſe of Auſtria, and ſucceeded to the empire as well as to all the hereditary dominions of that family. Could they be in earneſt who maintained, even in this conjuncture, that "no peace could be ſafe, honorable, „ or laſting, ſo long as the kingdom of Spain „ and the Weſt-Indies remained in the poſſeſſion „ of any branch of the houſe of Bourbon?" Did they mean that CHARLES ſhould be emperor and king of Spain? In this project they would have had the allies againſt them. Did they mean to call the duke of SAVOY to the crown of Spain, or to beſtow it on ſome other prince? In this project they would have had his Imperial majeſty againſt them. In either caſe the confederacy would have been broken: and how then would they have continued the war? Did they mean nothing, or did they mean ſomething more than they owned;

ſomething more than to reduce the exorbitant power of France, and to force the whole Spaniſh monarchy out of the houſe of Bourbon?

BOTH theſe ends might have been obtained at Gertruydenberg. Why were they not obtained? Read the preliminaries of one thouſand ſeven hundred and nine, which were made the foundation of this treaty. Inform yourſelf of what paſſed there, and obſerve what followed. Your lordſhip will remain aſtoniſhed. I remain ſo every time I reflect upon them, though I ſaw theſe things at no very great diſtance, even whilſt they were in tranſaction; and though I know moſt certainly that France loſt, two years before, by the little ſkill and addreſs of her principal * miniſter, in anſwering overtures made during the ſiege of Liſle by a principal perſon among the allies, ſuch an opportunity, and ſuch a correſpondence, as would have removed ſome of the obſtacles that lay now in her way, have prevented others, and have procured her peace. An equivalent for the thirty-ſeventh article of the preliminaries, that is, for the ceſſion of Spain and the Weſt-Indies, was the point to be diſcuſſed at Gertruydenberg. Naples and Sicily, or even Naples and Sardinia would have contented the French, at leaſt they would have accepted them as the equivalent. BUYS and VANDERDUSSEN, who treated with them, reported this to the miniſters of the allies: and it was upon this occaſion that the duke of MARLBOROUGH, as BUYS himſelf told me, took immediately the lead, and congratulated the aſſembly on the near ap-

* CHAMILLARD.

proach of a peace; ſaid, that ſince the French were in this diſpoſition, it was time to conſider what further demands ſhould be made upon them, according to the liberty obſerved in the preliminaries; and exhorted all the miniſters of the allies to adjuſt their ſeveral ulterior pretenſions, and to prepare their demands.

THIS proceeding, and what followed, put me in mind of that of the Romans with the Carthaginians. The former were reſolved to conſent to no peace till Carthage was laid in ruins. They ſet a treaty however on foot, at the requeſt of their old enemy, impoſed ſome terms, and referred them to their generals for the reſt. Their generals purſued the ſame method, and, by reſerving ſtill a right of making ulterior demands, they reduced the Carthaginians at laſt to the neceſſity of abandoning their city, or of continuing the war after they had given up their arms, their machines, and their fleet, in hopes of peace.

FRANCE ſaw the ſnare, and reſolved to run any riſque rather than to be caught in it. We continued to demand, under pretence of ſecuring the ceſſion of Spain and the Weſt-Indies, that LEWIS the fourteenth ſhould take on him to dethrone his grandſon in the ſpace of two months; and, if he did not effect it in that time, that we ſhould be at liberty to renew the war without reſtoring the places that were to be put into our hands according to the preliminaries; which were the moſt important places France poſſeſſed on the ſide of the Low Countries. LEWIS offered to abandon his

grandſon; and, if he could not prevail on him to reſign, to furniſh money to the allies, who might at the expence of France force him to evacuate Spain. The propoſition made by the allies had an air of inhumanity: and the reſt of mankind might be ſhocked to ſee the grandfather obliged to make war on his grandſon. But LEWIS the fourteenth had treated mankind with too much inhumanity in his proſperous days, to have any reaſon to complain even of this propoſition. His people indeed, who are apt to have great partiality for their kings, might pity his diſtreſs. This happened, and he found his account in it. PHILIP muſt have evacuated Spain, I think, notwithſtanding his own obſtinacy, the ſpirit of his queen, and the reſolute attachment of the Spaniards, if his grandfather had inſiſted, and been in earneſt to force him. But if this expedient was, as it was, odious, why did we prefer to continue the war againſt France and Spain, rather than accept the other? Why did we neglect the opportunity of reducing, effectually and immediately, the exorbitant power of France, and of rendering the conqueſt of Spain practicable? both which might have been brought about, and conſequently the avowed ends of the war might have been anſwered, by accepting the expedient that France offered. " France " it was ſaid, „ was not ſincere: ſhe meant nothing more than „ to amuſe, and divide. " This reaſon was given at the time; but ſome of thoſe who gave it then, I have ſeen aſhamed to inſiſt on it ſince. France was not in a condition to act the part ſhe had

acted in former treaties: and her diſtreſs was no bad pledge of her ſincerity on this occaſion. But there was a better ſtill. The ſtrong places that she muſt have put into the hands of the allies, would have expoſed her, on the leaſt breach of faith, to ſee, not her frontier alone, but even the provinces that lie behind it, deſolated: and prince EUGENE might have had the ſatisfaction, it is ſaid, I know not how truly, he deſired, of marching with the torch in his hand to Verſailles.

YOUR lordship will obſerve, that the conferences at Gertruydenberg ending in the manner they did, the inflexibility of the allies gave new life and ſpirit to the French and Spanish nations, diſtreſſed and exhauſted as they were. The troops of the former withdrawn out of Spain, and the Spaniards left to defend themſelves as they could, the Spaniards alone obliged us to retreat from Madrid, and defeated us in our retreat. But your lordship may think perhaps, as I do, that if LEWIS the fourteenth had bound himſelf by a ſolemn treaty to abandon his grandſon, had paid a ſubſidy to dethrone him, and had conſented to acknowledge another king of Spain, the Spaniards would not have exerted the ſame zeal for PHILIP; the actions of Almenara and Saragoſſa might have been deciſive, and thoſe of Brihuega and Villa Vicioſa would not have happened. After all theſe events, how could any reaſonable man expect that a war should be ſupported with advantage in Spain, to which the court of Vienna had contributed nothing from the firſt, ſcarce bread to

their archduke; which Portugal waged faintly and with deficient quotas; and which the Dutch had in a manner renounced, by neglecting to recruit their forces? How was CHARLES to be placed on the Spanish throne, or PHILIP at leaſt to be driven out of it? by the ſucceſs of the confederate arms in other parts. But what ſucceſs ſufficient to this purpoſe, could we expect? This queſtion may be anſwered beſt, by shewing what ſucceſs we had.

PORTUGAL and Savoy did nothing before the death of the emperor JOSEPH; and declared in form, as ſoon as he was dead, that they would carry on the war no longer to ſet the crown of Spain on the head of CHARLES, ſince this would be to fight againſt the very principle they had fought for. The Rhine was a ſcene of inaction. The ſole efforts, that were to bring about the great event of dethroning PHILIP, were thoſe which the duke of MARLBOROUGH was able to make. He took three towns in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ten, Aire, Bethune, and St. Venant: and one, Bouchain, in one thouſand ſeven hundred and eleven. Now this conqueſt being in fact the only one the confederates made that year, Bouchain may be ſaid properly and truly to have coſt our nation very near ſeven millions ſterling; for your lordship will find, I believe, that the charge of the war for that year amounted to no leſs. It is true that the duke of MARLBOROUGH had propoſed a very great project, by which incurſions would have been made during the winter into France;

France; the next campaign might have been opened early on our ſide; and ſeveral other great and obvious advantages might have been obtained; but the Dutch refuſed to contribute, even leſs than their proportion, for the queen had offered to take the deficiency on herſelf, to the expence of barraks and forage; and diſappointed by their obſtinacy the whole deſign.

WE were then amuſed with viſionary ſchemes of marching our whole army, in a year or two more, and after a town or two more were taken, directly to Paris, or at leaſt into the heart of France. But was this ſo eaſy or ſo ſure a game? The French expected we would play it. Their generals had viſited the ſeveral poſts they might take, when our army ſhould enter France, to retard, to incommode, to diſtreſs us in our march, and even to make a deciſive ſtand and to give us battle. I take what I ſay here from indiſputable authority, that of the perſons conſulted and employed in preparing for this great diſtreſs. Had we been beaten, or had we been forced to retire towards our own frontier in the Low Countries, after penetrating into France, the hopes on which we protracted the war would have been diſappointed, and, I think, the moſt ſanguine would have then repented refuſing the offers made at Gertruydenberg. But if we had beaten the French; for it was ſcarce lawful in thoſe days of our preſumption to ſuppoſe the contrary, would the whole monarchy of Spain have been our immediate and certain prize? Suppoſe, and I ſuppoſe it on good

grounds, my lord, that the French had reſolved to defend their country inch by inch, and that LEWIS the fourteenth had determined to retire with his court to Lions or elſewhere, and to defend the paſſage of the Loire, when he could no longer defend that of the Seine, rather than ſubmit to the terms impoſed on him: what ſhould we have done in this caſe? Muſt we not have accepted ſuch a peace as we had refuſed; or have protracted the war till we had conquered France firſt, in order to conquer Spain afterwards? Did we hope for revolutions in France? We had hoped for them in Spain: and we ſhould have been bubbles of our hopes in both. That there was a ſpirit raiſed againſt the government of LEWIS the fourteenth, in his court, nay in his family, and that ſtrange ſchemes of private ambition were formed and forming there, I cannot doubt: and ſome effects of this ſpirit produced perhaps the greateſt mortifications that he ſuffered in the latter part of his reign.

A SLIGHT inſtance of this ſpirit is all I will quote at this time. I ſupped, in the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and fifteen, at a houſe in France, where two * perſons of no ſmall figure, who had been in great company that night, arrived very late. The converſation turned on the events of the precedent war, and the negotiations of the late peace; in the proceſs of the converſation, one of them † broke looſe, and ſaid, directing his

* The dukes de LA FEUILLADE and MORTEMAR.
† LA FEUILLADE.

diſcourſe to me, "Vous auriez pu nous écraſer „ dans ce tems là: pourquoi ne l'avez-vous pas fait?" I anſwered him coolly, "Par ce que dans ce tems-„ là nous n'avons plus craint votre puiſſance." This anecdote, too trivial for hiſtory, may find its place in a letter, and may ſerve to confirm what I have admitted, that there were perſons even in France, who expected to find their private account in the diſtreſs of their country. But theſe perſons were a few, men of wild imaginations and ſtrong paſſions, more enterprizing than capable, and of more name than credit. In general the endeavours of LEWIS the fourteenth, and the ſacrifices he offered to make in order to obtain a peace, had attached his people more than ever to him: and if LEWIS had determined not to go farther than he had offered at Gertruydenberg, in abandoning his grandſon, the French nation would not have abandoned him.

BUT to reſume what I have ſaid or hinted already; the neceſſary conſequences of protracting the war in order to dethrone PHILIP, from the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and eleven incluſively, could be no other than theſe: our deſign of penetrating into France might have been defeated, and have become fatal to us by a reverſe of fortune: our firſt ſucceſs might not have obliged the French to ſubmit; and we might have had France to conquer, after we had failed in our firſt attempt to conquer Spain, and even in order to proceed to a ſecond: the French might have ſubmitted, and the Spaniards not; and whilſt the former had been employed to force the latter,

according to the ſcheme of the allies; or whilſt, the latter ſubmitting likewiſe, PHILIP had evacuated Spain, the high allies might have gone together by the ears about dividing the ſpoil, and diſpoſing of the crown of Spain. To theſe iſſues were things brought by protracting the war; by refuſing to make peace, on the principles of the grand alliance at worſt, in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix; and by refuſing to grant it, even on thoſe of the new plan, in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ten. Such contingent events as I have mentioned ſtood in proſpect before us. The end of the war was removed out of ſight; and they, who clamoured rather than argued for the continuation of it, contented themſelves to affirm, that France was not enough reduced, and that no peace ought to be made as long as a prince of the houſe of Bourbon remained on the Spaniſh throne. When they would think France enough reduced, it was impoſſible to gueſs. Whether they intended to join the Imperial and Spaniſh crowns on the head of CHARLES, who had declared his irrevocable reſolution to continue the war till the conditions inſiſted upon at Gertruydenberg were obtained: whether they intended to beſtow Spain and the Indies on ſome other prince: and how this great alteration in their own plan ſhould be effected by common conſent: how poſſeſſion ſhould be given to CHARLES, or to any other prince, not only of Spain but of all the Spaniſh dominions out of Europe, where the attachment to PHILIP was at leaſt as ſtrong as in Caſtile, and where it would not be ſo eaſy, the

diſtance and extent of theſe dominions conſidered, to oblige the Spaniards to ſubmit to another government: Theſe points, and many more equally neceſſary to be determined, and equally difficult to prepare, were neither determined nor prepared; ſo that we were reduced to carry on the war, after the death of the emperor JOSEPH, without any poſitive ſcheme agreed to, as the ſcheme of the future peace, by the allies. That of the grand alliance we had long before renounced: that of the new plan was become ineligible; and, if it had been eligible, it would have been impracticable, becauſe of the diviſion it would have created among the allies themſelves: ſeveral of whom would not have conſented, notwithſtanding his irrevocable reſolution, that the emperor ſhould be king of Spain. I know not what part the protractors of the war, in the depth of their policy, intended to take. Our nation had contributed, and acted ſo long under the direction of their councils, for the grandeur of the houſe of Auſtria, like one of the hereditary kingdoms uſurped by that family, that it is lawful to think their intention might be to unite the Imperial and Spaniſh crowns. But I rather think they had no very determinate view, beyond that of continuing the war as long as they could. The late lord OXFORD told me, that my lord SOMERS being preſſed, I know not on what occaſion nor by whom, on the unneceſſary and ruinous continuation of the war, inſtead of giving reaſons to ſhew the neceſſity of it, contented himſelf to reply, that he had been bred up in a

hatred of France. This was a ſtrange reply for a wiſe man: and yet I know not whether he could have given a better then, or whether any of his pupils could give a better now.

THE whig party in general acquired great and juſt popularity, in the reign of our CHARLES the ſecond, by the clamor they raiſed againſt the conduct of that prince in foreign affairs. They who ſucceeded to the name rather than the principles of this party, after the revolution, and who have had the adminiſtration of the government in their hands with very little interruption ever ſince, pretending to act on the ſame principle, have run into an extreme as vicious and as contrary to all the rules of good policy, as that which their predeceſſors exclaimed againſt. The old whigs complained of the inglorious figure we made, whilſt our court was the bubble, and our king the penſioner of France; and inſiſted that the growing ambition and power of LEWIS the fourteenth should be oppoſed in time. The modern whigs boaſted, and ſtill boaſt, of the glorious figure we made, whilſt we reduced ourſelves, by their councils, and under their adminiſtrations, to be the bubbles of our penſioners, that is of our allies; and whilſt we meaſured our efforts in war, and the continuation of them, without any regard to the intereſts and abilities of our own country, without a juſt and ſober regard, ſuch an one as contemplates objects in their true light and ſees them in their true magnitude, to the general ſyſtem of power in Europe; and, in short, with

a principal regard merely to particular intereſts at home and abroad. I ſay at home and abroad; becauſe it is not leſs true, that they have ſacrificed the wealth of their country to the forming and maintaining a party at home, than that they have done ſo to the forming and maintaining, beyond all pretences of neceſſity, alliances abroad. Theſe general aſſertions may be eaſily juſtified without having recourſe to private anecdotes, as your lordship will find when you conſider the whole ſeries of our conduct in the two wars; in that which preceded, and that which ſucceeded immediately the beginning of the preſent century, but above all the laſt of them. In the adminiſtrations that preceded the revolution, trade had flouriſhed, and our nation had grown opulent: but the general intereſt of Europe had been too much neglected by us; and slavery, under the umbrage of prerogative, had been well nigh eſtabliſhed among us. In thoſe that have followed, taxes upon taxes, and debts upon debts have been perpetually accumulated, till a ſmall number of families have grown into immenſe wealth, and national beggary has been brought upon us; under the ſpecious pretences of ſupporting a common cauſe againſt France, reducing her exorbitant power, and poiſing that of Europe more equally in the public balance: laudable deſigns no doubt, as far as they were real, but ſuch as, being converted into mere pretences, have been productive of much evil; ſome of which we feel and have long felt, and ſome will extend it's conſequences to our lateſt

poſterity. The reign of prerogative was ſhort: and the evils and the dangers, to which we were expoſed by it, ended with it. But the reign of falſe and ſquandering policy has laſted long, it laſts ſtill, and will finally complete our ruin. Beggary has been the conſequence of ſlavery in ſome countries: ſlavery will be probably the conſequence of beggary in ours; and if it is ſo, we know at whoſe door to lay it. If we had finished the war in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix, we ſhould have reconciled, like a wiſe people, our foreign and our domeſtic intereſts as nearly as poſſible: we ſhould have ſecured the former ſufficiently, and not have ſacrificed the latter as entirely as we did by the proſecution of the war afterwards. You will not be able to ſee without aſtoniſhment, how the charge of the war encreaſed yearly upon us from the beginning of it; nor how immenſe a ſum we paid in the courſe of it to ſupply the deficiencies of our confederates. Your aſtoniſhment, and indignation too, will increaſe, when you come to compare the progreſs that was made from the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix excluſively, with the expence of more than thirty millions, I do not exaggerate though I write upon memory, that this progreſs coſt us, to the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and eleven incluſively. Upon this view, your lordſhip will be perſuaded that it was high time to take the reſolution of making peace, when the queen thought fit to change her miniſtry, towards the end of the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ten. It

was high time indeed to ſave our country from abſolute inſolvency and bankruptcy, by putting an end to a ſcheme of conduct, which the prejudices of a party, the whimſy of ſome particular men, the private intereſt of more, and the ambition and avarice of our allies, who had been invited as it were to a ſcramble by the preliminaries of one thouſand ſeven hundred and nine, alone maintained. The perſons therefore, who came into power at this time, hearkened, and they did well to hearken, to the firſt overtures that were made them. The diſpoſition of their enemies invited them to do ſo, but that of their friends, and that of a party at home who had nurſed, and been nurſed by the war, might have deterred them from it, for the difficulties and dangers, to which they muſt be expoſed in carrying forward this great work, could eſcape none of them. In a letter to a friend it may be allowed me to ſay, that they did not eſcape me: and that I foreſaw, as contingent but not improbable events, a good part of what has happened to me ſince. Though it was a duty therefore that we owed to our country, to deliver her from the neceſſity of bearing any longer ſo unequal a part in ſo unneceſſary a war, yet was there ſome degree of merit in performing it. I think ſo ſtrongly in this manner, I am ſo incorrigible, my lord, that if I could be placed in the ſame circumſtances again, I would take the ſame reſolution, and act the ſame part. Age and experience might enable me to act with more ability, and greater skill; but all I have

ſuffered ſince the death of the queen should not hinder me from acting. Notwithſtanding this, I shall not be ſurpriſed if you think that the peace of Utrecht was not anſwerable to the ſucceſs of the war, nor to the efforts made in it. I think ſo myſelf, and have always owned, even when it was making and made, that I thought ſo. Since we had committed a ſucceſsful folly, we ought to have reaped more advantage from it than we did: and, whether we had left PHILIP, or placed another prince on the throne of Spain, we ought to have reduced the power of France, and to have ſtrengthened her neighbours, much more than we did. We ought to have reduced her power for generations to come, and not to have contented ourſelves with a momentary reduction of it. France was exhauſted to a great degree of men and money, and her government had no credit: but they, who took this for a ſufficient reduction of her power, looked but a little way before them, and reaſoned too ſuperficially. Several ſuch there were however; for as it has been ſaid, that there is no extravagancy which ſome philoſopher or other has not maintained, ſo your experience, young as you are, muſt have shewn you, that there is no abſurd extreme, into which our party-politicians of Great Britain are not prone to fall, concerning the ſtate and conduct of public affairs. But if France was exhauſted: ſo were we, and ſo were the Dutch. Famine rendered her condition much more miſerable than ours, at one time, in appearance and in reality too. But as ſoon as this accident, that had diſtreſſed

the French and frightened LEWIS the fourteenth to the utmoſt degree, and the immediate conſequences of it were over; it was obvious to obſerve, though few made the obſervation, that whilſt we were unable to raiſe in a year, by ſome millions at leaſt, the expences of the year, the French were willing and able to bear the impoſition of the tenth over and above all the other taxes that had been laid upon them. This obſervation had the weight it deſerved; and ſure it deſerved to have ſome among thoſe who made it, at the time ſpoken of, and who did not think that the war was to be continued as long as a parliament could be prevailed on to vote money. But ſuppoſing it to have deſerved none, ſuppoſing the power of France to have been reduced as low as you pleaſe, with reſpect to her inward ſtate; yet ſtill I affirm, that ſuch a reduction could not be permanent, and was not therefore ſufficient. Whoever knows the nature of her government, the temper of her people, and the natural advantages she has in commerce over all the nations that ſurround her, knows, that an arbitrary government, and the temper of her people enable her on particular occaſions to throw off a load of debt much more eaſily, and with conſequences much leſs to be feared, than any of her neighbours can: that although, in the general courſe of things, trade be cramped and induſtry vexed by this arbitrary government, yet neither one nor the other is oppreſſed; and the temper of the people, and the natural advantages of the country, are ſuch, that how great ſoever

her diſtreſs be at any point of time, twenty years of tranquility ſuffice to re-eſtabliſh her affairs, and to enrich her again at the expence of all the nations of Europe. If any one doubts of this, let him conſider the condition in which this kingdom was left by LEWIS the fourteenth; the ſtrange pranks the late duke of ORLEANS played, during his regency and adminiſtration, with the whole ſyſtem of public revenue, and private property; and then let him tell himſelf, that the revenues of France, the tenth taken off, exceed all the expences of her government by many millions of livres already, and will exceed them by many more in another year.

UPON the whole matter, my lord, the low and exhauſted ſtate to which France was reduced, by the laſt great war, was but a momentary reduction of her power: and whatever real and more laſting reduction the treaty of Utrecht brought about in ſome inſtances, it was not ſufficient. The power of France would not have appeared as great as it did, when England and Holland armed themſelves and armed all Germany againſt her, if ſhe had lain as open to the invaſions of her enemies, as her enemies lay to her's. Her inward ſtrength was great; but the ſtrength of thoſe frontiers which LEWIS the fourteenth was almoſt forty years in forming, and which the folly of all his neighbours in their turns ſuffered him to form, made this ſtrength as formidable as it became. The true reduction of the exorbitant power of France, I take no notice of chimerical projects about changing

her government, conſiſted therefore in diſarming her frontiers, and fortifying the barriers againſt her, by the ceſſion and demolition of many more places than she yielded up at Utrecht; but not of more than she might have been obliged to ſacrifice to her own immediate relief, and to the future ſecurity of her neighbours. That she was not obliged to make theſe ſacrifices, I affirm was owing ſolely to thoſe who oppoſed the peace: and I am willing to put my whole credit with your lordship, and the whole merits of a cauſe that has been ſo much conteſted, on this iſſue. I ſay a cauſe that has been ſo much conteſted; for in truth, I think, it is no longer a doubt any where, except in British pamphlets, whether the conduct of thoſe who neither declined treating, as was done in one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix; nor pretended to treat without a deſign of concluding, as was done in one thouſand ſeven hundred and nine and ten, but carried the great work of the peace forward to its conſummation; or the conduct of thoſe who oppoſed this work in every ſtep of its progreſs, ſaved the power of France from a greater and a ſufficient reduction at the treaty of Utrecht. The very miniſters, who were employed in this fatal oppoſition, are obliged to confeſs this truth. How should they deny it? Thoſe of Vienna may complain that the emperor had not the entire Spanish monarchy, or thoſe of Holland that the States were not made maſters directly and indirectly of the whole Low Countries. But neither they, nor any one elſe that has any ſenſe of shame about

him, can deny that the late queen, though she was reſolved to treat becauſe she was reſolved to finish the war, yet was to the utmoſt degree deſirous to treat in a perfect union with her allies, and to procure them all the reaſonable terms they could expect; and much better than thoſe they reduced themſelves to the neceſſity of accepting, by endeavouring to wreſt the negotiation out of her hands. The diſunion of the allies gave France the advantages she improved. The ſole queſtion is, Who cauſed this diſunion? and that will be eaſily decided by every impartial man, who informs himſelf carefully of the public anecdotes of that time. If the private anecdotes were to be laid open as well as thoſe, and I think it almoſt time they should, the whole monſtrous ſcene would appear, and shock the eye of every honeſt man. I do not intend to deſcend into many particulars at this time: but whenever I, or any other perſon as well informed as I, shall deſcend into a full deduction of ſuch particulars, it will become undeniably evident, that the moſt violent oppoſition imaginable, carried on by the Germans and the Dutch in league with a party in Britain, began as ſoon as the firſt overtures were made to the queen; before she had ſo much as begun to treat: and was therefore an oppoſition not to this or that plan of treaty, but in truth to all treaty; and eſpecially to one wherein Great Britain took the lead, or was to have any particular advantage. That the Imperialiſts meant no treaty, unleſs a preliminary, and impracticable condition of it was

to ſet the crown of Spain on the emperor's head, will appear from this; that prince EUGENE, when he came into England, long after the death of JOSEPH and the elevation of CHARLES, upon an errand moſt unworthy of ſo great a man, treated always on this ſuppoſition: and I remember with how much inward impatience I aſſiſted at conferences held with him concerning quotas for renewing the war in Spain, in the very ſame room, at the cockpit, where the queen's miniſters had been told in plain terms, a little before, by thoſe of other allies, "that their maſters would not conſent „ that the Imperial and Spaniſh crowns ſhould „ unite on the ſame head." That the Dutch were not averſe to all treaty, but meant none wherein Great Britain was to have any particular advantage, will appear from this; that their miniſter declared himſelf ready and authoriſed to ſtop the oppoſition made to the queen's meaſures, by preſenting a memorial, wherein he would declare, "that his „ maſters entered into them, and were reſolved „ not to continue the war for the recovery of „ Spain, provided the queen would conſent that „ they ſhould garriſon Gibraltar and Port-mahon „ jointly with us, and ſhare equally the Aſſiento, „ the South Sea ſhip, and whatever ſhould be „ granted by the Spaniards to the queen and her „ ſubjects." That the whigs engaged in this league with foreign powers againſt their country, as well as their queen, and with a phrenſy more unaccountable than that which made and maintained the ſolemn league and covenant formerly, will

appear from this; that their attempts were directed not only to wreſt the negotiations out of the queen's hands, but to oblige their country to carry on the war, on the ſame unequal foot that had coſt her already about twenty millions more than she ought to have contributed to it. For they not only continued to abet the emperor, whoſe inability to ſupply his quota was confeſſed; but the Dutch likewiſe, after the States had refuſed to ratify the treaty their miniſter ſigned at London towards the end of the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and eleven, and by which the queen united herſelf more cloſely than ever to them; engaging to purſue the war, to conclude the peace, and to guaranty it, when concluded, jointly with them; "provided they would keep „ the engagements they had taken with her, and „ the conditions of proportionate expence under „ which our nation had entered into the war." Upon ſuch ſchemes as theſe was the oppoſition to the treaty of Utrecht carried on: and the means employed, and the means projected to be employed, were worthy of ſuch ſchemes; open, direct, and indecent defiance of legal authority, ſecret conſpiracies againſt the ſtate, and baſe machinations againſt particular men, who had no other crime than that of endeavouring to conclude a war, under the authority of the queen, which a party in the nation endeavoured to prolong, againſt her authority. Had the good policy of concluding the war been doubtful, it was certainly as lawful for thoſe, who thought it good, to adviſe it, as

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it had been for thoſe, who thought it bad, to adviſe the contrary: and the deciſion of the ſovereign on the throne ought to have terminated the conteſt. But he who had judged by the appearances of things on one ſide, at that time, would have been apt to think, that putting an end to the war, or to Magna Charta, was the ſame thing; that the queen on the throne had no right to govern independently of her ſucceſſor; nor any of her ſubjects a right to adminiſter the government under her, though called to it by her, except thoſe whom she had thought fit to lay aſide. Extravagant as theſe principles are, no other could juſtify the conduct held at that time by thoſe who oppoſed the peace: and as I ſaid juſt now, that the phrenſy of this league was more unaccountable than that of the ſolemn league and covenant, I might have added, that it was not very many degrees leſs criminal. Some of thoſe, who charged the queen's miniſters, after her death, with imaginary treaſons, had been guilty during her life of real treaſons: and I can compare the folly and violence of the ſpirit that prevailed at that time, both before the concluſion of the peace, and, under pretence of danger to the ſucceſſion, after it, to nothing more nearly than to the folly and violence of the ſpirit that ſeized the tories ſoon after the acceſſion of GEORGE the firſt. The latter indeed, which was provoked by unjuſt and impolitic perſecution, broke out in open rebellion; the former might have done ſo, if the queen had lived a little longer. But to return.

THE obſtinate adherence of the Dutch to this league, in oppoſition to the queen, rendered the conferences of Utrecht, when they were opened, no better than mock conferences. Had the men who governed that commonwealth been wiſe and honeſt enough to unite, at leaſt then, cordially with the queen, and, ſince they could not hinder a congreſs, to act in concert with her in it; we ſhould have been ſtill in time to maintain a ſufficient union among the allies, and a ſufficient ſuperiority over the French. All the ſpecific demands that the former made, as well as the Dutch themſelves, either to incumber the negotiation, or to have in reſerve, according to the artifice uſually employed on ſuch occaſions, certain points from which to depart in the courſe of it with advantage, would not have been obtained: but all the eſſential demands, all in particular that were really neceſſary to ſecure the barriers in the Low Countries and of the four circles againſt France, would have been ſo: for France muſt have continued, in this caſe, rather to ſue for peace, than to treat on an equal foot. The firſt dauphin, ſon of LEWIS the fourteenth, died ſeveral months before this congreſs began: the ſecond dauphin, his grandſon, and the wife and the eldeſt ſon of this prince, died ſoon after it began, of the ſame unknown diſtemper, and were buried together in the ſame grave. Such family misfortunes, following a long ſeries of national misfortunes, made the old king, though he bore them with much ſeeming magnanimity, deſirous to get out of the war at any tolerable

rate, that he might not run the riſque of leaving a child of five years old, the preſent king, engaged in it. The queen did all that was morally poſſible, except giving up her honor in the negotiation, and the intereſts of her ſubjects in the conditions of peace, to procure this union with the ſtates general. But all she could do was vain; and the ſame phrenſy, that had hindered the Dutch from improving to their and to the common advantage the public misfortunes of France, hindered them from improving to the ſame purpoſes the private misfortunes of the houſe of Bourbon. They continued to flatter themſelves that they should force the queen out of her meaſures, by their intrigues with the party in Britain who oppoſed theſe meaſures, and even raiſe an inſurrection againſt her. But theſe intrigues, and thoſe of prince EUGENE, were known and diſappointed; and monſieur BUYS had the mortification to be reproached with them publicly, when he came to take leave of the lords of the council, by the earl of OXFORD; who entered into many particulars that could not be denied, of the private transactions of this ſort, to which BUYS had been a party, in compliance with his inſtructions, and, as I believe, much againſt his own ſenſe and inclinations. As the ſeaſon for taking the field advanced, the league propoſed to defeat the ſucceſs of the congreſs by the events of the campaign; but inſtead of defeating the ſucceſs of the congreſs, the events of the campaign ſerved only to turn this ſucceſs in favor of France. At the

beginning of the year, the queen and the States, in concert, might have given the law to friend and foe, with great advantage to the former, and with ſuch a detriment to the latter, as the cauſes of the war rendered juſt, the events of it reaſonable, and the objects of it neceſſary. At the end of the year, the allies were no longer in a ſtate of giving, nor the French of receiving the law; and the Dutch had recourſe to the queen's good offices, when they could oppoſe and durſt inſult her no longer. Even then, theſe offices were employed with zeal, and with ſome effect for them.

THUS the war ended, much more favorably to France than she expected, or they who put an end to it deſigned. The queen would have humbled and weakened this power. The allies who oppoſed her would have crushed it, and have raiſed another as exorbitant on the ruins of it. Neither one nor the other ſucceeded, and they who meant to ruin the French power preſerved it, by oppoſing thoſe who meant to reduce it.

SINCE I have mentioned the events of the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and twelve, and the deciſive turn they gave to the negotiations in favor of France, give me leave to ſay ſomething more on this ſubject. You will find that I shall do ſo with much impartiality. The diſaſtrous events of this campaign in the Low Countries, and the conſequences of them, have been imputed to the ſeparation of the British troops from the army of the allies. The clamor againſt this meaſure was great at that time, and the prejudices which this clamor

raiſed are great ſtill among ſome men. But as clamor raiſed theſe prejudices, other prejudices gave birth to this clamor: and it is no wonder they ſhould do ſo among perſons bent on continuing the war; ſince I own very freely, that when the firſt ſtep that led to this ſeparation came to my knowledge, which was not an hour, by the way, before I writ by the queen's order to the duke of ORMOND, in the very words in which the order was adviſed and given, "that he ſhould not engage in any „ ſiege, nor hazard a battle, till further order," I was ſurpriſed and hurt; ſo much, that if I had had an opportunity of ſpeaking in private to the queen, after I had received monſieur DE TORCY'S letter to me on the ſubject, and before ſhe went into the council, I ſhould have ſpoken to her, I think, in the firſt heat, againſt it. The truth is, however, that the ſtep was juſtifiable at that point of time in every reſpect, and therefore that the conſequences are to be charged to the account of thoſe who drew them on themſelves, not to the account of the queen, nor of the miniſter who adviſed her. The ſtep was juſtifiable to the allies ſurely, ſince the queen took no more upon her, no not ſo much by far, in making it, as many of them had done by ſuſpending, or endangering, or defeating operations in the heat of the war, when they declined to ſend their troops, or delayed the march of them, or neglected the preparations they were obliged to make, on the moſt frivolous pretences. Your lordſhip will find in the courſe of your enquiries many particular inſtances

of what is here pointed out in general. But I cannot help deſcending into ſome few of thoſe that regard the emperor and the States General, who cried the loudeſt and with the moſt effect, though they had the leaſt reaſon, on account of their own conduct, to complain of the queen's. With what face could the emperor, for inſtance, preſume to complain of the orders ſent to the duke of ORMOND? I ſay nothing of his deficiencies, which were ſo great, that he had at this very time little more than one regiment that could be ſaid properly to act againſt France and Spain at his ſole charge; as I affirmed to prince EUGENE before the lords of the council, and demonſtrated upon paper the next day. I ſay nothing of all that preceded the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſeven, on which I ſhould have much to ſay. But I deſire your lordship only to conſider, what you will find to have paſſed after the famous year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſix. Was it with the queen's approbation, or againſt her will, that the emperor made the treaty for the evacuation of Lombardy, and let out ſo great a number of French regiments time enough to recruit themſelves at home, to march into Spain, and to deſtroy the British forces at Almanza? Was it with her approbation, or againſt her will, that, inſtead of employing all his forces and all his endeavours, to make the greateſt deſign of the whole war, the enterpriſe on Toulon, ſucceed, he detached twelve thouſand men to reduce the kingdom of Naples, that muſt have fallen of courſe? and that an opportunity of

ruining the whole maritime force of France, and of ruining or ſubduing her provinces on that ſide, was loſt, merely by this unneceſſary diverſion, and by the conduct of prince EUGENE, which left no room to doubt that he gave occaſion to this fatal diſappointment on purpoſe, and in concert with the court of Vienna?

TURN your eyes, my lord, on the conduct of the States, and you will find reaſon to be aſtoniſhed at the arrogance of the men who governed in them at this time, and who preſumed to exclaim againſt a queen of Great Britain, for doing what their deputies had done more than once in that very country, and in the courſe of that very war. In the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and twelve, at the latter end of a war, when conferences for treating a peace were opened, when the leaſt ſiniſter event in the field would take off from that ſuperiority which the allies had in the congreſs, and when the paſt ſucceſs of the war had already given them as much of this ſuperiority as they wanted to obtain a ſafe, advantageous, honorable, and laſting peace, the queen directed her general to ſuſpend till further order the operations of her troops. In one thouſand ſeven hundred and three, in the beginning of a war, when ſomething was to be riſqued or no ſucceſs to be expected, and when the bad ſituation of affairs in Germany and Italy required, in a particular manner, that efforts ſhould be made in the Low Countries, and that the war ſhould not languiſh there whilſt it was unſucceſsful every where elſe; the duke of MARLBOROUGH

determined to attack the French, but the Dutch deputies would not ſuffer their troops to go on; defeated his deſign in the very moment of it's execution, if I remember well, and gave no other reaſon for their proceeding than that which is a reaſon againſt every battle, the poſſibility of being beaten. The circumſtance of proximity to their frontier was urged, I know, and it was ſaid, that their provinces would be expoſed to the incurſions of the French if they loſt the battle. But beſides other anſwers to this vain pretence, it was obvious that they had ventured battles as near home as this would have been fought, and that the way to remove the enemy farther off was by action, not inaction. Upon the whole matter, the Dutch deputies ſtopped the progreſs of the confederate army at this time, by exerciſing an arbitrary and independent authority over the troops of the States. In one thouſand ſeven hundred and five, when the ſucceſs of the preceding campaign ſhould have given them an entire confidence in the duke of MARLBOROUGH's conduct, when returning from the Moſelle to the Low Countries he began to make himſelf and the common cauſe amends, for the diſappointment which pique and jealouſy in the prince of BADEN, or uſual ſloth and negligence in the Germans, had occaſioned juſt before, by forcing the French lines; when he was in the full purſuit of this advantage, and when he was marching to attack an enemy half defeated, and more than half-diſpirited; nay when he had made his diſpoſitions for attacking, and part of his troops

had paſſed the Dyle — the deputies of the States once more tied up his hands, took from him an opportunity too fair to be loſt; for theſe, I think, were ſome of the terms of his complaint: and in ſhort the confederacy received an affront at leaſt, where we might have obtained a victory. Let this that has been ſaid ſerve as a ſpecimen of the independency on the queen, her councils, and her generals, with which theſe powers acted in the courſe of the war; who were not aſhamed to find fault that the queen, once, and at the latter end of it, preſumed to ſuſpend the operations of her troops till farther order. But be it that they foreſaw what this farther order would be. They foreſaw then, that as ſoon as Dunkirk ſhould be put into the queen's hands, ſhe would conſent to a ſuſpenſion of arms for two months, and invite them to do the ſame. Neither this foreſight, nor the ſtrong declaration which the biſhop of BRISTOL made by the queen's order at Utrecht, and which ſhewed them that her reſolution was not taken to ſubmit to the league into which they had entered againſt her, could prevail on them to make a right uſe of theſe two months, by endeavouring to renew their union and good underſtanding with the queen; though I can ſay with the greateſt truth, and they could not doubt of it at the time, that ſhe would have gone more than half-way to meet them, and that her miniſters would have done their utmoſt to bring it about. Even then we might have reſumed the ſuperiority we began to loſe in the congreſs; for, the queen and the

States uniting, the principal allies would have united with them: and, in this caſe, it would have been ſo much the intereſt of France to avoid any chance of ſeeing the war renewed, that she muſt, and she would, have made ſure of peace, during the ſuſpenſion, on much worſe terms for herſelf and for Spain, than she made it afterwards. But the prudent and ſober States continued to act like froward children, or like men drunk with reſentment and paſſion; and ſuch will the conduct be of the wiſe governments in every circumſtance, where a ſpirit of faction and of private intereſt prevails, among thoſe who are at the head, over reaſon or ſtate. After laying aſide all decency in their behaviour towards the queen, they laid aſide all caution for themſelves. They declared "they „ would carry on the war without her." Landrecy ſeemed, in their eſteem, of more importance than Dunkirk; and the opportunity of waſting ſome French provinces, or of putting the whole event of the war on the deciſion of another battle, preferable to the other meaſure that lay open to them; that, I mean, of trying in good earneſt, and in an honeſt concert with the queen, during the ſuſpenſion of arms, whether ſuch terms of peace, as ought to ſatisfy them and the other allies might not be impoſed on France.

IF the confederate army had broke into France, the campaign before this, or in any former campaign; and if the Germans and the Dutch had exerciſed then the ſame inhumanity, as the French had exerciſed in their provinces in former wars; if they had burnt Verſailles, and even Paris, and

if they had diſturbed the aſhes of the dead princes that repoſe at Saint Denis, every good man would have felt the horror, that ſuch cruelties inſpire: no man could have ſaid that the retaliation was unjuſt. But in one thouſand ſeven hundred and twelve, it was too late, in every reſpect, to meditate ſuch projects. If the French had been unprepared to defend their frontier, either for want of means, or in a vain confidence that the peace would be made, as our king CHARLES the ſecond was unprepared to defend his coaſt at the latter end of his firſt war with Holland, the allies might have played a ſure game in ſatisfying their vengeance on the French, as the Dutch did on us in one thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty ſeven; and impoſing harder terms on them, than thoſe they offered, or would have accepted. But this was not the caſe. The French army was, I believe, more numerous than the army of the allies, even before ſeparation, and certainly in a much better condition than two or three years before, when a deluge of blood was ſpilt to diſlodge them, for we did no more, at Malplaquet. Would the Germans and the Dutch have found it more eaſy to force them at this time, than it was at that? Would not the French have fought with as much obſtinacy to ſave Paris, as they did to ſave Mons? and, with all the regard due to the duke of ORMOND and to prince EUGENE, was the abſence of the duke of MARLBOROUGH of no conſequence? Turn this affair every way in your thoughts, my lord, and you will find that the Germans and the

Dutch had nothing in theirs, but to break, at any rate, and at any riſque, the negotiations that were begun, and to reduce Great Britain to the neceſſity of continuing, what she had been too long, a province of the confederacy. A province indeed, and not one of the beſt treated; ſince the confederates aſſumed a right of obliging her to keep her pacts with them, and of diſpenſing with their obligations to her, of exhauſting her, without rule, or proportion, or meaſure, in the ſupport of a war, to which she alone contributed more than all of them, and in which she had no longer an immediate intereſt, nor even any remote intereſt that was not common, or, with reſpect to her, very dubious; and, after all this, of complaining that the queen preſumed to hearken to overtures of peace, and to ſet a negotiation on foot, whilſt their humor and ambition required that the war should be prolonged for an indefinite time, and for a purpoſe that was either bad or indeterminate.

THE ſuſpenſion of arms, that began in the Low Countries, was continued, and extended afterwards by the act I ſigned at Fontainebleau. The fortune of the war turned at the ſame time: and all thoſe diſgraces followed, which obliged the Dutch to treat, and to deſire the aſſiſtance of the queen, whom they had ſet at defiance ſo lately. This aſſiſtance they had, as effectually as it could be given in the circumſtances, to which they had reduced themſelves, and the whole alliance: and the peace of Great Britain, Portugal, Savoy, Pruſſia, and the States General, was made, without

his imperial majeſty's concurrence, in the ſpring of one thouſand ſeven hundred and thirteen; as it might have been made, much more advantageously for them all, in that of one thouſand ſeven hundred and twelve. Leſs obſtinacy on the part of the States, and perhaps more deciſive reſolutions on the part of the queen, would have wound up all theſe divided threads in one, and have finiſhed this great work much ſooner and better. I ſay, perhaps more deciſive reſolutions on the part of the queen; becauſe, although I think that I ſhould have conveyed her orders for ſigning a treaty of peace with France, before the armies took the field, much more willingly, than I executed them afterwards in ſigning that of the ceſſation of arms; yet I do not preſume to decide, but ſhall deſire your lordſhip to do ſo, on a review of all circumſtances, ſome of which I ſhall juſt mention.

THE league made for protracting the war having oppoſed the queen to the utmoſt of their power, and by means of every ſort, from the firſt appearances of a negotiation; the general effect of this violent oppoſition, on her and her miniſters was, to make them proceed by ſlower and more cautious ſteps: the particular effect of it was, to oblige them to open the eyes of the nation, and to inflame the people with a deſire of peace, by ſhewing, in the moſt public and ſolemn manner, how unequally we were burdened, and how unfairly we were treated by our allies. The firſt gave an air of diffidence and timidity to their conduct, which encouraged the league, and gave vigor to the

oppoſition. The ſecond irritated the Dutch particularly; for the emperor and the other allies had the modeſty at leaſt, not to pretend to bear any proportion in the expence of the war: and thus the two powers, whoſe union was the moſt eſſential, were the moſt at variance, and the queen was obliged to act in a cloſer concert with her enemy who deſired peace, than she would have done if her allies had been leſs obſtinately bent to protract the war. During theſe tranſactions, my lord OXFORD, who had his correſpondencies apart, and a private thread of negotiation always in his hands, entertained hopes that PHILIP would be brought to abandon Spain in favor of his father-in-law, and to content himſelf with the ſtates of that prince, the kingdom of Sicily, and the preſervation of his right of ſucceſſion to the crown of France. Whether my lord had any particular reaſons for entertaining theſe hopes, beſides the general reaſons founded on the condition of France, on that of the Bourbon family, and on the diſpoſition of LEWIS the fourteenth, I doubt very much. That LEWIS, who ſought, and had need of ſeeking peace, almoſt at any rate, and who ſaw that he could not obtain it, even of the queen, unleſs PHILIP abandoned immediately the crown of Spain, or abandoned immediately, by renunciation and a ſolemn act of excluſion, all pretenſion to that of France. That LEWIS was deſirous of the former, I cannot doubt; that PHILIP would have abandoned Spain with the equivalents that have been mentioned, or either of them, I believe likewiſe;

if the preſent king of FRANCE had died, when his father, mother, and eldeſt brother did: for they all had the ſame diſtemper. But LEWIS would uſe no violent means to force his grandſon; the queen would not continue the war to force him; PHILIP was too obſtinate, and his wife too ambitious, to quit the crown of Spain, when they had diſcovered our weakneſs, and felt their own ſtrength in that country, by their ſucceſs in the campaign of one thouſand ſeven hundred and ten: after which my lord STANHOPE himſelf was convinced that Spain could not be conquered, nor kept, if it was conquered, without a much greater army, than it was poſſible for us to ſend thither. In that ſituation it was wild to imagine, as the earl of OXFORD imagined, or pretended to imagine, that they would quit the crown of Spain, for a remote and uncertain proſpect of ſucceeding to that of France, and content themſelves to be, in the mean time, princes of very ſmall dominions. PHILIP therefore, after ſtruggling long that he might not be obliged to make his option till the ſucceſſion of France lay open to him, was obliged to make it, and made it, for Spain. Now this, my lord, was the very criſis of the negotiation: and to this point I apply what I ſaid above of the effect of more deciſive reſolutions on the part of the queen. It was plain, that, if she made the campaign in concert with her allies, she could be no longer miſtreſs of the negotiations, nor have almoſt a chance for conducting them to the iſſue she propoſed. Our ill ſucceſs in the field would

have rendered the French leſs tractable in the congreſs: our good ſucceſs there would have rendered the allies ſo. On this principle the queen ſuſpended the operations of her troops, and then concluded the ceſſation.

COMPARE now the appearances and effect of this meaſure, with the appearances and effect that another meaſure would have had. In order to arrive at any peace, it was neceſſary to do what the queen did, or to do more: and, in order to arrive at a good one, it was neceſſary to be prepared to carry on the war, as well as to make a ſhew of it; for ſhe had the hard task upon her, of guarding againſt her allies, and her enemies both. But in that ferment, when few men conſidered any thing coolly, the conduct of her general, after he took the field, though he covered the allies in the ſiege of Queſnoy, correſponded ill, in appearance, with the declarations of carrying on the war vigorously, that had been made, on ſeveral occaſions, before the campaign opened. It had an air of double dealing; and as ſuch it paſſed among thoſe, who did not combine in their thoughts all the circumſtances of the conjuncture, or who were infatuated with the notional neceſſity of continuing the war. The clamor could not have been greater, if the queen had ſigned her peace ſeparately: and, I think, the appearances might have been explained as favorably in one caſe, as in the other. From the death of the emperor JOSEPH, it was neither our intereſt, nor the common intereſt, well underſtood, to ſet the

crown

crown of Spain on the preſent emperor's head. As ſoon therefore as PHILIP had made his option, and if ſhe had taken this reſolution early, his option would have been ſooner made, I preſume that the queen might have declared, that ſhe would not continue the war an hour longer to procure Spain for his Imperial majeſty; that the engagements, ſhe had taken whilſt he was archduke, bound her no more; that, by his acceſſion to the empire, the very nature of them was altered; that ſhe took effectual meaſures to prevent, in any future time, an union of the crowns of France and Spain, and, upon the ſame principle, would not conſent, much leſs fight, to bring about an immediate union of the Imperial and Spaniſh crowns; that they, who inſiſted to protract the war, intended this union; that they could intend nothing elſe, ſince they ventured to break with her, rather than to treat, and were ſo eager to put the reaſonable ſatisfaction, that they might have in every other caſe without hazard, on the uncertain events of war; that ſhe would not be impoſed on any longer in this manner, and that ſhe had ordered her miniſters to ſign her treaty with France, on the ſurrender of Dunkirk into her hands; that ſhe pretended not to preſcribe to her allies, but that ſhe had inſiſted, in their behalf, on certain conditions, that France was obliged to grant to thoſe of them, who ſhould ſign their treaties at the ſame time as ſhe did, or who ſhould conſent to an immediate ceſſation of arms, and during the ceſſation treat under her mediation. There had been

more frankneſs, and more dignity in this proceeding, and the effect muſt have been more advantageous. France would have granted more for a ſeparate peace, than for a ceſſation: and the Dutch would have been more influenced by the proſpect of one, than of the other: eſpecially ſince this proceeding would have been very different from theirs at Munſter, and at Nimeghen, where they abandoned their allies, without any other pretence than the particular advantage they found in doing ſo. A ſuſpenſion of the operations of the queen's troops, nay a ceſſation of arms between her and France, was not definitive; and they might, and they did, hope to drag her back under their, and the German yoke. This therefore was not ſufficient to check their obſtinacy, nor to hinder them from making all the unfortunate haſte they did make to get themſelves beaten at Denain. But they would poſſibly have laid aſide their vain hopes, if they had ſeen the queen's miniſters ready to ſign her treaty of peace, and thoſe of ſome principal allies ready to ſign at the ſame time; in which caſe the miſchief, that followed, had been prevented, and better terms of peace had been obtained for the confederacy: a prince of the houſe of Bourbon, who could never be king of France, would have ſat on the Spaniſh throne, inſtead of an emperor: the Spaniſh ſcepter would have been weakened in the hands of one, and the Imperial ſcepter would have been ſtrengthened in thoſe of the other: France would have had no opportunity of recovering from former blows, nor of finiſhing

a long unſucceſsful war by two ſucceſsful campaigns: her ambition, and her power, would have declined with her old king, and under the minority that followed: one of them at leaſt might have been ſo reduced by the terms of peace, if the defeat of the allies in one thouſand ſeven hundred and twelve, and the loſs of ſo many towns as the French took in that and the following year, had been prevented, that the other would have been no longer formidable, even ſuppoſing it to have continued; whereas I ſuppoſe that the tranquillity of Europe is more due, at this time, to want of ambition, than to want of power, on the part of France. But, to carry the compariſon of theſe two meaſures to the end, it may be ſuppoſed that the Dutch would have taken the ſame part, on the queen's declaring a ſeparate peace, as they took on her declaring a ceſſation. The preparations for the campaign in the Low countries were made; the Dutch, like the other confederates, had a juſt confidence in their own troops, and an unjuſt contempt for thoſe of the enemy; they were tranſported from their uſual ſobriety and caution by the ambitious proſpect of large acquiſitions, which had been opened artfully to them; the reſt of the confederate army was compoſed of Imperial and German troops: ſo that the Dutch, the Imperialiſts, and the other Germans, having an intereſt to decide which was no longer the intereſt of the whole confederacy, they might have united againſt the queen in one caſe, as they did in the other; and the miſchief, that followed

to them and the common cauſe, might not have been prevented. This might have been the caſe, no doubt. They might have flattered themſelves that they ſhould be able to break into France, and to force PHILIP, by the diſtreſs brought on his grandfather, to reſign the crown of Spain to the emperor, even after Great Britain, and Portugal, and Savoy too perhaps, were drawn out of the war; for theſe princes deſired as little, as the queen, to ſee the Spaniſh crown on the emperor's head. But, even in this caſe, though the madneſs would have been greater, the effect would not have been worſe. The queen would have been able to ſerve theſe confederates as well by being mediator in the negotiations, as they left it in her power to do, by being a party in them: and Great Britain would have had the advantage of being delivered ſo much ſooner from a burden, which whimſical and wicked politics had impoſed, and continued upon her till it was become intolerable. Of theſe two meaſures, at the time when we might have taken either, there were perſons who thought the laſt preferable to the former. But it never came into public debate. Indeed it never could; too much time having been loſt in waiting for the option of PHILIP, and the ſuſpenſion and ceſſation having been brought before the council rather as a meaſure taken, than a matter to be debated. If your lordſhip, or any one elſe, ſhould judge, that, in ſuch circumſtances as thoſe of the confederacy in the beginning of one thouſand ſeven hundred and twelve, the latter meaſure ought to have been

taken, and the Gordian knot to have been cut, rather than to ſuffer a mock treaty to languish on, with ſo much advantage to the French as the diſunion of the allies gave them; in ſhort, if ſlowneſs, perplexity, inconſiſtency, and indeciſion ſhould be objected, in ſome inſtances, to the queen's councils at that time; if it ſhould be ſaid particularly, that ſhe did not obſerve the preciſe moment when the conduct of the league formed againſt her, being expoſed to mankind, would have juſtified any part ſhe ſhould have taken (though ſhe declared, ſoon after the moment was paſſed, that this conduct had ſet her free from all her engagements) and when ſhe ought to have taken that of drawing, by one bold meaſure, her allies out of the war, or herſelf out of the confederacy, before ſhe loſt her influence on France: if all this ſhould be objected, yet would the proofs brought to ſupport theſe objections ſhew, that we were better allies than politicians, that the deſire the queen had to treat in concert with her confederates, and the reſolution ſhe took not to ſign without them, made her bear what no crowned head had ever born before; and that where ſhe erred, ſhe erred principally by the patience, the compliance, and the condeſcenſion ſhe exerciſed towards them, and towards her own ſubjects in league with them. Such objections as theſe may lie to the queen's conduct, in the courſe of this great affair; as well as objections of human infirmity to that of thoſe perſons employed by her in the tranſactions of it; from which neither thoſe

who preceded, nor thoſe who ſucceeded, have, I preſume, been free. But the principles on which they proceeded were honeſt, the means they uſed were lawful, and the event they propoſed to bring about was juſt. Whereas the very foundation of all the oppoſition to the peace was laid in injuſtice and folly: for what could be more unjuſt, than the attempt of the Dutch and the Germans, to force the queen to continue a war for their private intereſt and ambition, the diſproportionate expence of which oppreſſed the commerce of her ſubjects, and loaded them with debts for ages yet to come? A war, the object of which was ſo changed, that from the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and eleven she made it not only without any engagement, but againſt her own, and the common intereſt? What could be more foolish; you will think that I ſoften the term too much, and you will be in the right to think ſo: what could be more foolish; than the attempt of a party in Britain, to protract a war ſo ruinous to their country, without any reaſon that they durſt avow, except that of wreaking the reſentments of Europe on France, and that of uniting the Imperial and Spanish crowns on an Auſtrian head? one of which was to purchaſe revenge at a price too dear; and the other was to expoſe the liberties of Europe to new dangers, by the concluſion of a war which had been made to aſſert and ſecure them.

I HAVE dwelt the longer on the conduct of thoſe who promoted, and of thoſe who oppoſed, the negotiations of the peace made at Utrecht,

and on the compariſon of the meaſure purſued by the queen with that which she might have purſued, becauſe the great benefit we ought to reap from the ſtudy of hiſtory, cannot be reaped unleſs we accuſtom ourſelves to compare the conduct of different governments, and different parties, in the ſame conjunctures, and to obſerve the meaſures they did purſue, and the meaſures they might have purſued, with the actual conſequences that followed one, and the poſſible, or probable conſequences, that might have followed the other. By this exerciſe of the mind, the ſtudy of hiſtory anticipates, as it were, experience, as I have obſerved in one of the firſt of theſe letters, and prepares us for action. If this conſideration should not plead a ſufficient excuſe for my prolixity on this head, I have one more to add that may. A rage of warring poſſeſſed a party in our nation till the death of the late queen: a rage of negotiating has poſſeſſed the ſame party of men, ever ſince. You have ſeen the conſequences of one: you ſee actually thoſe of the other. The rage of warring confirmed the beggary of our nation, which began as early as the revolution; but then it gave, in the laſt war, reputation to our arms, and our councils too. For though I think, and muſt always think, that the principle, on which we acted after departing from that laid down in the grand alliance of one thouſand ſeven hundred and one, was wrong: yet muſt we confeſs that it was purſued wiſely, as well as boldly. The rage of negotiating has been a chargeable rage likewiſe,

at leaſt as chargeable in it's proportion. Far from paying our debts, contracted in war, they continue much the ſame, after three and twenty years of peace. The taxes that oppreſs our mercantile intereſt the moſt are ſtill in mortgage; and thoſe that oppreſs the landed intereſt the moſt, inſtead of being laid on extraordinary occaſions, are become the ordinary funds for the current ſervice of every year. This is grievous, and the more ſo to any man, who has the honor of his country, as well as her proſperity at heart, becauſe we have not, in this caſe, the airy conſolation we had in the other. The rage of negotiating began twenty years ago, under pretence of conſummating the treaty of Utrecht: and, from that time to this, our miniſters have been in one perpetual maze. They have made themſelves and us, often, objects of averſion, to the powers on the continent: and we are become at laſt objects of contempt, even to the Spaniards. What other effect could our abſurd conduct have? What other return has it deſerved? We came exhauſted out of long wars; and, inſtead of purſuing the meaſures neceſſary to give us means and opportunity to repair our ſtrength and to diminish our burdens, our miniſters have acted, from that time to this, like men who ſought pretences to keep the nation in the ſame exhauſted condition, and under the ſame load of debt. This may have been their view perhaps; and we could not be ſurpriſed if we heard the ſame men declare national poverty neceſſary to ſupport the preſent government, who have ſo frequently declared

corruption and a ſtanding army to be ſo. Your good ſenſe, my lord, your virtue, and your love of your country, will always determine you to oppoſe ſuch vile ſchemes, and to contribute your utmoſt towards the cure of both theſe kinds of rage; the rage of warring, without any proportionable intereſt of our own, for the ambition of others; and the rage of negotiating, on every occaſion, at any rate, without a ſufficient call to it, and without any part of that deciding influence which we ought to have. Our nation inhabits an island, and is one of the principal nations of Europe; but, to maintain this rank, we muſt take the advantages of this ſituation, which have been neglected by us for almoſt half a century: we muſt always remember, that we are not part of the continent, but we muſt never forget that we are neighbours to it. I will conclude, by applying a rule, that HORACE gives for the conduct of an epic or dramatic poem, to the part Great Britain ought to take in the affairs of the continent, if you allow me to transform Britannia into a male divinity, as the verſe requires.

Nec Deus interſit, niſi dignus vindice nodus
Inciderit.

If theſe reflections are juſt, and I ſhould not have offered them to your lordship had they not appeared both juſt and important to my beſt underſtanding, you will think that I have not ſpent your time unprofitably in making them,

and exciting you by them to examine the true intereſt of your country relatively to foreign affairs; and to compare it with thoſe principles of conduct, that I am perſuaded, have no other foundation than party-deſigns, prejudices, and habits; the private intereſt of ſome men and the ignorance and raſhneſs of others.

MY letter is grown ſo long, that I ſhall ſay nothing to your lordſhip, at this time concerning the ſtudy of modern hiſtory, relatively to the intereſts of your country in domeſtic affairs; and I think there will be no need to do ſo at any other. The Hiſtory of the rebellion by your great grandfather, and his private memorials, which your lordſhip has in manuſcript, will guide you ſurely as far as they go: where they leave you, your lordſhip muſt not expect any hiſtory; for we have more reaſon to make this complaint, "abeſt enim hiſtoria literis noſtris," than TULLY had to put it into the mouth of ATTICUS, in his firſt book of laws. But where hiſtory leaves you, it is wanted leaſt: the traditions of this century, and of the latter end of the laſt, are freſh. Many, who were actors in ſome of theſe events, are alive; and many who have converſed with thoſe that were actors in others. The public is in poſſeſſion of ſeveral collections and memorials, and ſeveral there are in private hands. You will want no materials to form true notions of tranſactions ſo recent. Even pamphlets, writ on different ſides and on different occaſions in our party diſputes, and hiſtories of no more authority than

pamphlets, will help you to come at truth. Read them with ſuſpicion, my lord, for they deſerve to be ſuſpected: pay no regard to the epithets given, nor to the judgments paſſed; neglect all declamation, weigh the reaſoning, and advert to fact. With ſuch precautions, even BURNET's hiſtory may be of ſome uſe. In a word, your lordship will want no help of mine to diſcover, by what progreſſion the whole conſtitution of our country, and even the character of our nation, has been altered: nor how much a worſe uſe, in a national ſenſe, though a better in the ſenſe of party politicks, the men called Whigs have made of long wars and new ſyſtems of revenue, ſince the revolution; than the men called Tories made, before it, of long peace, and ſtale prerogative. When you look back three or four generations ago, you will ſee that the English were a plain, perhaps a rough, but a good-natured hoſpitable people, jealous of their liberties, and able as well as ready to defend them, with their tongues, their pens, and their ſwords. The reſtoration began to turn hoſpitality into luxury, pleaſure into debauch, and country peers and country commoners into courtiers and men of mode. But whilſt our luxury was young, it was little more than elegance: the debauch of that age was enlivened with wit, and varnished over with gallantry. The courtiers and the men of mode knew what the conſtitution was, reſpected it, and often aſſerted it. Arts and ſciences flourished, and, if we grew more trivial, we were not become either groſsly ignorant, or openly

profligate. Since the revolution, our kings have been reduced indeed to a ſeeming annual dependance on parliament; but the buſineſs of parliament, which was eſteemed in general a duty before, has been exerciſed in general as a trade ſince. The trade of parliament, and the trade of funds, have grown univerſal. Men, who ſtood forward in the world, have attended to little elſe. The frequency of parliaments, that increaſed their importance, and ſhould have increaſed the reſpect of them, has taken off from their dignity: and the ſpirit that prevailed, whilſt the ſervice in them was duty, has been debaſed ſince it became a trade. Few know, and ſcarce any reſpect, the British conſtitution: that of the church has been long ſince derided; that of the State as long neglected; and both have been left at the mercy of the men in power, whoever thoſe men were. Thus the Church, at leaſt the hierarchy, however ſacred in it's origin or wiſe in it's inſtitution, is become an uſeleſs burden on the State: and the State is become, under ancient and known forms, a new and undefinable monſter; compoſed of a king without monarchical ſplendor, a ſenate of nobles without ariſtocratical independency, and a ſenate of commons without democratical freedom. In the mean time, my lord, the very idea of wit, and all that can be called taſte, has been loſt among the great; arts and ſciences are ſcarce alive; luxury has been increaſed but not refined; corruption has been eſtabliſhed, and is avowed. When governments are worn out, thus it is: the decay

appears in every inſtance. Public and private virtue, public and private ſpirit, ſcience and wit, decline all together.

THAT you, my lord, may have a long and glorious share in reſtoring all theſe, and in drawing our government back to the true principles of it, I wish moſt heartily. Whatever errors I may have committed in public life, I have always loved my country: whatever faults may be objected to me in private life, I have always loved my friend: whatever uſage I have received from my country, it shall never make me break with her: whatever uſage I have received from my friends, I never shall break with one of them, while I think him a friend to my country. Theſe are the ſentiments of my heart. I know they are thoſe of your lordship's: and a communion of ſuch ſentiments is a tie that will engage me to be, as long as I live,

My lord,

Your moſt faithful ſervant.

A PLAN

FOR A

General Hiſtory of EUROPE.

LETTER IX.

I SHALL take the liberty of writing to you a little oftener than the three or four times a year, which, you tell me, are all you can allow yourſelf to write to thoſe you like beſt: and yet I declare to you with great truth, that you never knew me ſo buſy in your life, as I am at preſent. You muſt not imagine from hence that I am writing memoirs of myſelf. The ſubject is too slight to deſcend to poſterity, in any other manner, than by that occaſional mention which may be made of any little actor in the hiſtory of our age. SYLLA, CAESAR, and others of that rank, were, whilſt they lived, at the head of mankind: their ſtory was in ſome ſort the ſtory of the world, and as ſuch might very properly be tranſmitted under their names to future generations. But for thoſe who have acted much inferior parts, if they publish the piece, and call it after their own names, they are impertinent; if they publish only their own

share in it, they inform mankind by halves, and neither give much inſtruction, nor create much attention. France abounds with writers of this ſort, and, I think, we fall into the other extreme. Let me tell you, on this occaſion, what has ſometimes come into my thoughts.

THERE is hardly any century in hiſtory which began by opening ſo great a ſcene, as the century wherein we live, and ſhall I ſuppoſe, die. Compare it with others, even the moſt famous, and you will think ſo. I will ſketch the two laſt, to help your memory.

THE loſs of that balance which LAURENCE of Medicis had preſerved, during his time, in Italy; the expedition of CHARLES the eighth to Naples; the intrigues of the duke of MILAN, who ſpun, with all the refinements of art, that net wherein he was taken at laſt himſelf; the ſucceſsful dexterity of FERDINAND the Catholic, who built one pillar of the Auſtrian greatneſs in Spain, in Italy, and in the Indies; as the ſucceſſion of the houſe of Burgundy, joined to the Imperial dignity and the hereditary countries, eſtabliſhed another in the upper and lower Germany: theſe cauſes, and many others, combined to form a very extraordinary conjuncture; and, by their conſequences, to render the ſixteenth century fruitful of great events, and of aſtoniſhing revolutions.

THE beginning of the ſeventeenth opened ſtill a greater and more important ſcene. The Spaniſh yoke was well-nigh impoſed on Italy by the famous triumvirate, TOLEDO at Milan, OSSUNA

at Naples, and LA CUEVA at Venice. The diſtractions of France, as well as the ſtate-policy of the queen mother, ſeduced by Rome, and amuſed by Spain; the deſpicable character of our JAMES the firſt, the rashneſs of the elector Palatine, the bad intelligence of the princes and ſtates of the league in Germany, the mercenary temper of JOHN GEORGE of Saxony, and the great qualities of MAXIMILIAN of Bavaria, raiſed FERDINAND the ſecond to the Imperial throne; when, the males of the elder branch of the Auſtrian family in Germany being extinguished at the death of MATTHIAS, nothing was more deſirable, nor perhaps more practicable, than to throw the empire into another houſe. Germany ran the ſame riſque as Italy had done: FERDINAND ſeemed more likely, even than CHARLES the fifth had been, to become abſolute maſter; and, if France had not furnished the greateſt miniſter, and the North the greateſt captain, of that age, in the ſame point of time, Vienna and Madrid would have given the law to the weſtern world.

As the Auſtrian ſcale ſunk, that of Bourbon roſe. The true date of the riſe of that power, which has made the kings of France ſo conſiderable in Europe, goes up as high as CHARLES the ſeventh, and LEWIS the eleventh. The weakneſs of our HENRY the ſixth, the looſe conduct of EDWARD the fourth, and perhaps the overſights of HENRY the ſeventh, helped very much to knit that monarchy together, as well as to enlarge it. Advantage might have been taken of the diviſions

which

which religion occaſioned; and ſupporting the proteſtant party in France would have kept that crown under reſtraints, and under inabilities, in ſome meaſure equal to thoſe which were occaſioned anciently by the vaſt alienations of its demeſnes, and by the exorbitant power of its vaſſals. But JAMES the firſt was incapable of thinking with ſenſe, or acting with ſpirit. CHARLES the firſt had an imperfect glimpſe of his true intereſt, but his uxorious temper, and the extravagancy of that madman BUCKINGHAM, gave RICHELIEU time to finish a great part of his project: and the miſeries, that followed in England, gave MAZARINE time and opportunity to complete the ſyſtem. The laſt great act of this cardinal's adminiſtration was the Pyrenean treaty.

HERE I would begin, by repreſenting the face of Europe ſuch as it was at that epocha, the intereſts and the conduct of England, France, Spain, Holland, and the empire. A ſummary recapitulation should follow of all the ſteps taken by France, during more than twenty years, to arrive at the great object she had propoſed to herſelf in making this treaty: the moſt ſolemn article of which the miniſter, who negotiated it, deſigned should be violated; as appears by his letters, writ from the Island of Pheaſants, if I miſtake not. After this, another draught of Europe should have it's place according to the relations, which the ſeveral powers ſtood in, one towards another, in one thouſand ſix hundred and eighty eight: and the alterations which the revolution in England

made in the politicks of Europe. A ſummary account ſhould follow of the events of the war that ended in one thouſand ſix hundred and ninety ſeven, with the different views of king WILLIAM the third, and LEWIS the fourteenth, in making the peace of Ryſwic; which matter has been much canvaſſed, and is little underſtood. Then the diſpoſitions made by the partition-treaties, and the influences and conſequences of theſe treaties; and a third draught of the ſtate of Europe at the death of CHARLES the ſecond of Spain. All this would make the ſubject of one or two books, and would be the moſt proper introduction imaginable to an hiſtory of that war with which our century began, and of the peace which followed.

THIS war, foreſeen for above half a century, had been, during all that time, the great and conſtant object of the councils of Europe. The prize to be contended for was the richeſt that ever had been ſtaked, ſince thoſe of the Perſian and Roman empires. The union of two powers, which ſeparately, and in oppoſition, had aimed at univerſal monarchy, was apprehended. The confederates therefore engaged in it, to maintain a balance between the two houſes of Auſtria and Bourbon, in order to preſerve their ſecurity, and to aſſert their independence. But with the ſucceſs of the war they changed their views: and, if ambition began it on the ſide of France, ambition continued it on the other. The battles, the ſieges, the ſurpriſing revolutions, which happened in the courſe of this war, are not to be paralleled in any period

of the ſame compaſs. The motives, and the meaſures, by which it was protracted, the true reaſons why it ended in a manner, which appeared not proportionable to it's ſucceſs; and the new political ſtate into which Europe was thrown by the treaties of Utrecht and Baden, are ſubjects on which few perſons have the neceſſary informations, and yet every one ſpeaks with aſſurance, and even with paſſion. I think I could ſpeak on them with ſome knowledge, and with as much indifference as POLYBIUS does of the negotiations of his father LYCORTAS, even in thoſe points where I was myſelf an actor.

I WILL even confeſs to you, that I ſhould not deſpair of performing this part better than the former. There is nothing in my opinion ſo hard to execute, as thoſe political maps, if you will allow me ſuch an expreſſion, and thoſe ſyſtems of hints, rather than relations of events, which are neceſſary to connect and explain them; and which muſt be ſo conciſe, and yet ſo full; ſo complicate, and yet ſo clear. I know nothing of this ſort well done by the ancients. SALLUST'S introduction, as well as that of THUCYDIDES, might ſerve almoſt for any other piece of the Roman or Greek ſtory, as well as for thoſe which theſe two great authors choſe. POLYBIUS does not come up, in his introduction, to this idea neither. Among the moderns, the firſt book of MACHIAVEL'S Hiſtory of Florence is a noble original of this kind: and perhaps father PAUL'S Hiſtory of Benefices is, in the ſame kind of compoſition, inimitable.

THESE are a few of those thoughts, which come into my mind when I consider how incumbent it is on every man, that he should be able to give an account even of his leisure; and, in the midst of solitude, be of some use to society.

I KNOW not whether I shall have courage enough to undertake the task I have chalked out: I distrust my abilities with reason, and I shall want several informations, not easy, I doubt, for me to obtain. But, in all events, it will not be possible for me to go about it this year; the reasons of which would be long enough to fill another letter, and I doubt that you will think this grown too bulky already.

Adieu.

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